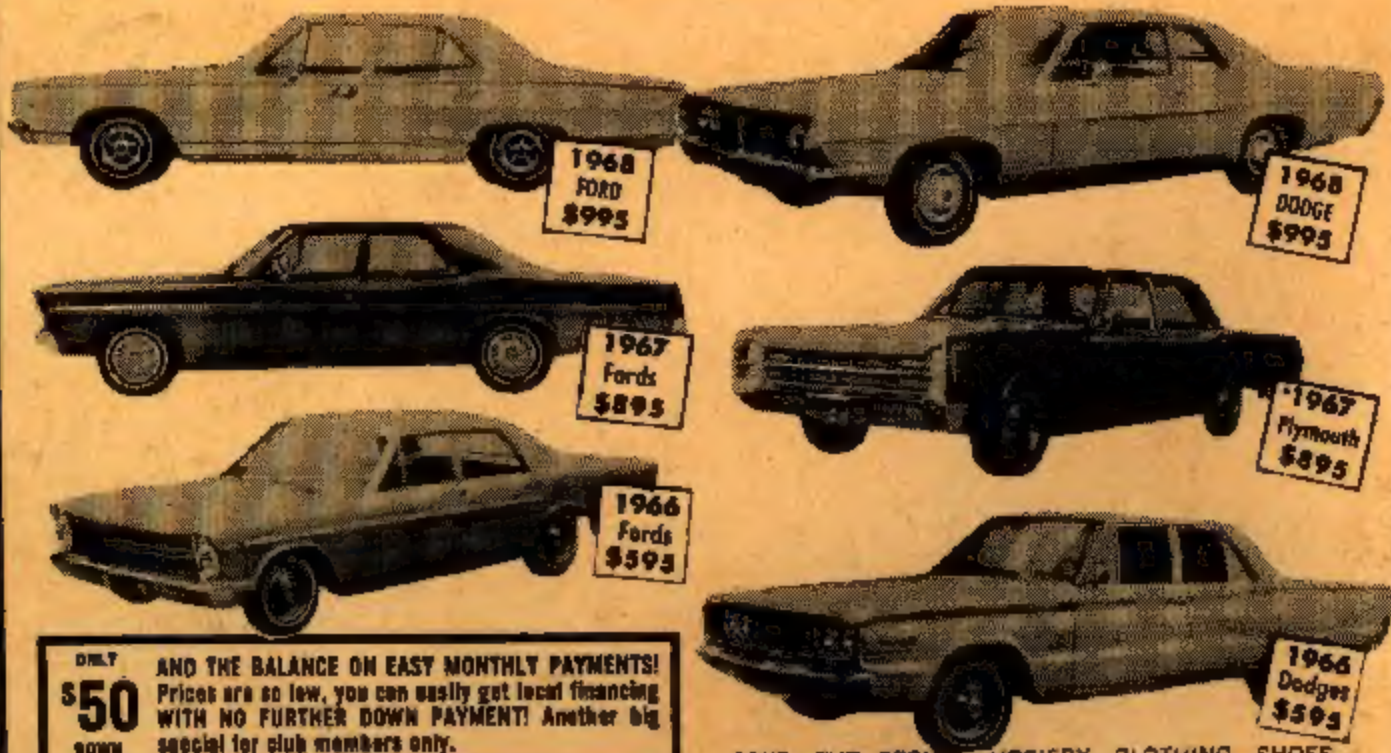
CHARLTON COMICS
BLUE BEETLE
12¢
NO. 5 NOV.
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
BB FACES THE "DESTROYER of HEROES"

NOW YOU CAN BUY FORDS, CHEVROLETS, DODGES BELOW WHOLESALE!!

NO GIMMICKS, NO HIDDEN CHARGES . . . THIS IS A STRAIGHT, HONEST OFFER! *PROMPT DELIVERY GUARANTEED.* RIGHT TO YOUR FRONT DOOR ANYWHERE IN THE UNITED STATES!!



ONLY **$50** down — AND THE BALANCE ON EASY MONTHLY PAYMENTS! Prices are so low, you can easily get local financing WITH NO FURTHER DOWN PAYMENT! Another big special for club members only.

HOW DO YOU GET IN ON THIS FABULOUS DEAL?

All you have to do is join the VIA DISCOUNT BUYERS CLUB. As a member we'll show you how you can get the car of your choice* promptly at the lowest price ever as shown above. Pre-Owned Cabs.

WHAT ELSE DOES THE CLUB DO?

As a club member, you receive regular mailings with pictures and descriptions of dozens and dozens of **name brand** items that you can buy direct by mail at fantastic low, low wholesale-discount prices. Name brands such as DUNCAN-HINES, DORMEYER, COLEMAN, GRUEN, PRESTO, INTERNATIONAL SILVER, NUTONE, POLAROID, REMINGTON RAND, SCHICK, SMITH CORONA, SUNBEAM, WATERMAN, WEBCOR, WEAREVER, WESTINGHOUSE AND MANY, MANY MORE...APPLIANCES, TV SETS, TYPEWRITERS, WATCHES, JEWELRY, RADIOS, STEREO SETS, COOKWARE, FISHING SETS, SILVERWARE, HUNTING EQUIPMENT, BOOKS, GLASSWARE, LINENS, DRAPERY, FABRICS, FURNITURE, TOYS, FUR STOLES, HOSIERY, CLOTHING, SHOES, AND MUCH, MUCH MORE . . . Why pay regular retail prices? Join the VIA DISCOUNT BUYERS CLUB today and start saving big money on merchandise and reconditioned fleet cars.

*Delivery of 1968 cars made on a first come first served basis, during last quarter of model year

MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

We're so certain that you'll be absolutely thrilled as a member of the club, that we'll refund your $3.00 membership fee anytime during the year you belong if you are dissatisfied for any reason whatsoever, with no questions asked. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain!

VIA DISCOUNT BUYERS CLUB
DEPT. [illegible]
333 OLD TARRYTOWN ROAD
WHITE PLAINS, NEW YORK 10603

I enclose three dollars as payment in full for a year's membership in the VIA DISCOUNT BUYERS CLUB. Please send complete information on the automobiles as described above, immediately by return mail. Also put me on the list to receive the descriptions and photos of name brand merchandise that I can purchase at wholesale and discount prices by mail. I understand that I am not obligated to buy anything and that I will receive a full refund of my $3.00 membership fee at anytime, with no questions asked.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____

ZIP CODE _____

the BLUE BEETLE

Faces The DestRoyeR of HeRoes

SCRIPT BY: D.C. GLANZMAN
PENCILED BY: STEVE DITKO
INKED BY: STEVE DITKO
LETTERED BY: A. MACHINE

BORIS BRAK, ART CRITIC LECTURES AT A HUB CITY MUSEUM...
HERE IS WHAT I CALL 'OUR MAN'! THIS ANONYMOUS WORK IS A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF ART THAT REVEALS THE TRUE SPIRIT OF MAN...MAN AS HE REALLY IS. THE ENTIRE FORM IS NONDESCRIPT...LACKING THE USUAL, GROTESQUE, HEROIC POSE. THE MISSING EYES, A PROFOUNDLY HUMAN TOUCH WITH WHICH ALL MAN MAY IDENTIFY AND WHICH DRAMATIZES MAN'S INEVITABLE WEAKNESSES. NOTICE PLEASE, THE TOUCH OF PURE GENIUS...THE DELIBERATE LACK OF HEART! THE FACULTY THAT MAN SHOULD OBEY! THE CLOSED HANDS, SYMBOLIZING MAN'S INABILITY TO SOLVE OR CONTROL THE ILLUSION WE CALL EXISTENCE. YES, THIS IS TRUE MAN...THIS IS HOW WE REALLY ARE...NO ONE CAN IMPROVE ON IT...OR ESCAPE IT! WE CAN ONLY ACCEPT...OUR MAN!
TED, EVEN IF HE MEANS IT AS A JOKE, IT'S A DISGUSTING APPRAISAL OF MAN!
HE MEANS IT, TRACEY...AND HE AND A LOT OF OTHERS REALLY BELIEVE IT!
LOVE
SLEEP
IT'S TRUE! THAT'S EXACTLY HOW I FEEL! MAN IS AN INCOMPETENT NOTHING IN A WORLD OF MYSTIC TERRORS... ALL WITHOUT MEANING OR PURPOSE!

BLUE BEETLE Vol. 1, No. 5, November, 1968, is published four times yearly by Charlton Comics Group, Charlton Building, Derby, Conn. 06418.

AH, THE FAMOUS VIC SAGE, SURELY YOU SHARE MY ESTHETIC BELIEFS, THE IRREFUTABLE LOGIC THAT ...
I'LL SPEAK FOR MYSELF! YOUR VIEWS AND THAT THING BELONG ON A JUNK HEAP! BUT IT'S PERFECT FOR ALL OF YOU...
HOW DARE HE ATTACK EBAR OR A TRUE WORK OF ART!
...PERFECT FOR SELF-ADMITTED NOTHINGS WHO HAVE NOWHERE TO GO IN THEIR WORLD OF NOTHING!
COME ON, TRACEY! WE BELONG IN *HIS* COMPANY!
WHAT A DIFFERENCE! THE MEN WHO CREATED THESE CERTAINLY THOUGHT WELL OF MAN AND HIS WORLD!
AND OF THEMSELVES, TRACEY! THEY SPENT THEMSELVES ON WHAT THEY CONSIDERED WORTHY OF THEIR TIME AND ABILITIES!
AAACK! THIS TRASH IS FOR FAIRY TALES!
NOW I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO SEE A PLAGUE COMING ON!
THIS PRETTY STUFF GIVES ME THE CREEPS. THEY'RE TRYING TO PUT ME DOWN!
MY, MY, IT'S SO UNFAIR, ISN'T IT! YOU CAN'T HAVE WHAT YOU WANT AND WISHING FOR IT SHOULD BE ALL THE EFFORT YOU NEED TO GET ANYTHING.
"THE UNCONQUERED." I HATE THAT STATUE! I HATE HEROES. I'LL... I'LL SMASH IT!!
DON'T YOU DARE LAY A HAND ON THAT STATUE!

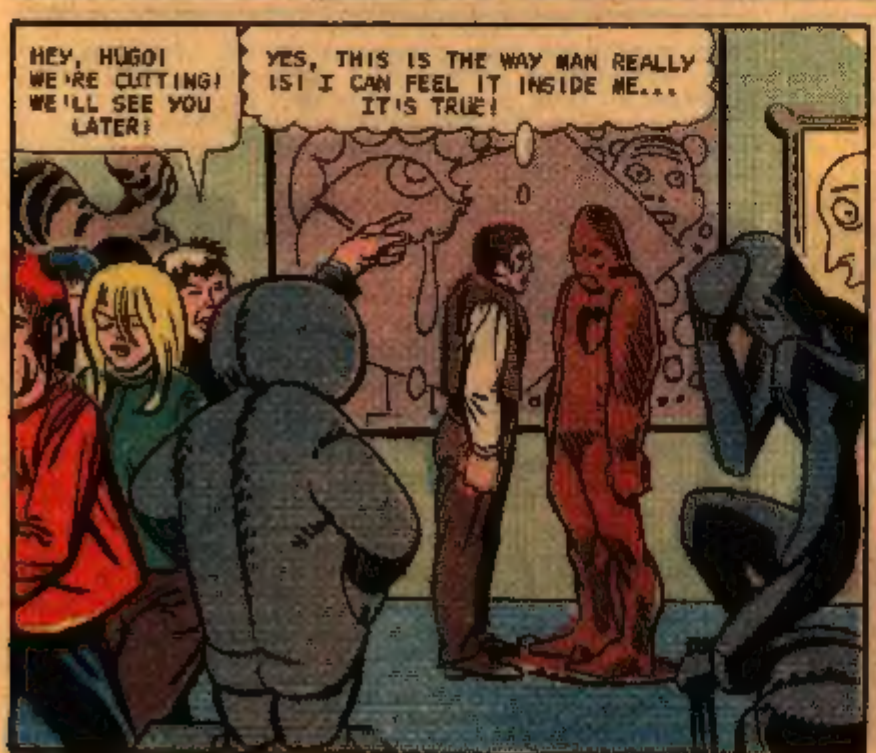
HE CAN'T DO THAT TO HUGO! LET'S GET HIM! HE'S ONLY ONE GUY!
...AND I MAKE TWO!
...THREE! I'M NOT GOING TO STAY OUT OF THIS.

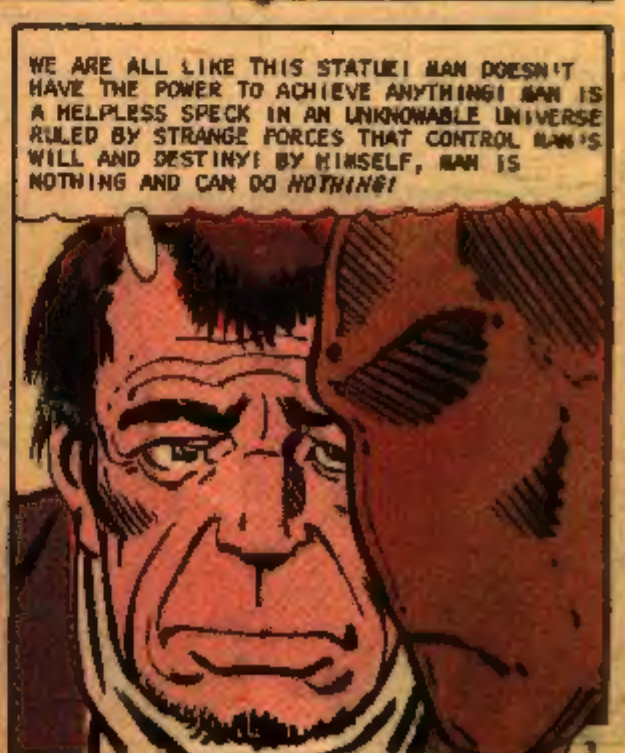
AHH, LET THEM GO! THEY'LL BE YELLIN' FOR THE COPS! COME ON, THIS JOINT MAKES ME ITCH!
THANKS FOR STANDING WITH ME!
I THANK YOU! YOU SAVED A FINE PIECE OF ART!

SAGE, YOU OWE ME AN APOLOGY! I'M A RECOGNIZED ART CRITIC AND YOU EMBARRASSED ME... YOU MADE ME APPEAR LIKE A FOOL!
I OWE YOU NOTHING! HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR OWN EVALUATION OF ART IS YOUR BUSINESS! DON'T TRY TO USE ME TO FOSTER YOUR OPINIONS!

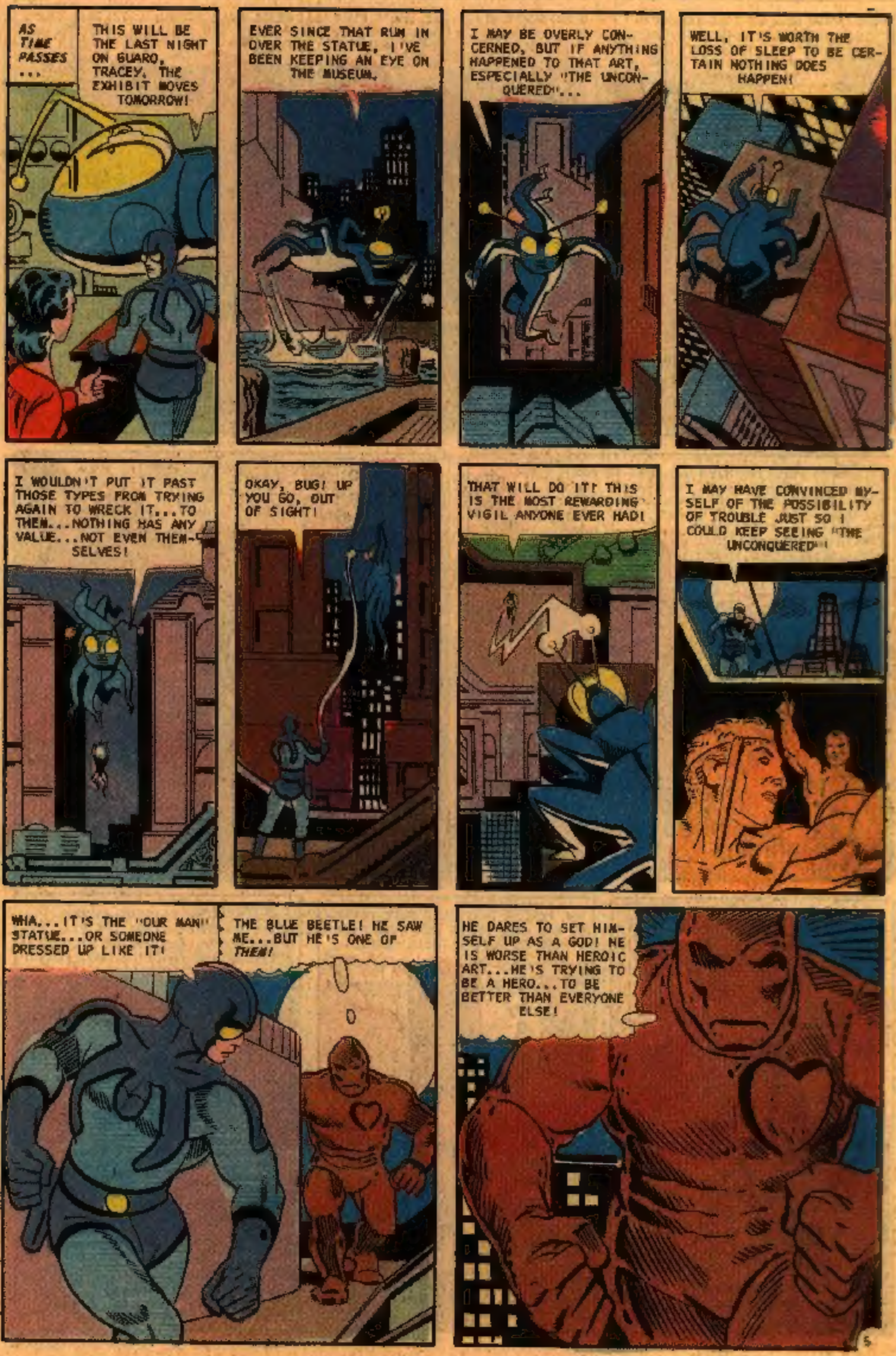
TED, WHY ARE YOU STARING AT "THE UNCONQUERED"?
THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT IT! IT SIGNIFIES MORE TO ME THAN JUST A FINE FIGURE...SOMETHING DEEPER...

IT'S PROOF THAT MAN IS NOT HELPLESS! MAN CAN SET A GOAL AND ACHIEVE IT. AS THE SCULPTOR DID WITH HIS STATUE, SO CAN ANYONE ELSE, BUT MAN HAS TO MOTIVATE HIMSELF!


HEY, HUGO! WE'RE CUTTING! WE'LL SEE YOU LATER!
YES, THIS IS THE WAY MAN REALLY IS! I CAN FEEL IT INSIDE ME... IT'S TRUE!


WE ARE ALL LIKE THIS STATUE! MAN DOESN'T HAVE THE POWER TO ACHIEVE ANYTHING! MAN IS A HELPLESS SPECK IN AN UNKNOWABLE UNIVERSE RULED BY STRANGE FORCES THAT CONTROL MAN'S WILL AND DESTINY! BY HIMSELF, MAN IS NOTHING AND CAN DO *NOTHING!*

MAN CAN'T BE GREAT OR HEROIC! ANYTHING THAT SHOWS HIM BEING BETTER THAN HE REALLY IS...IS EVIL! IT PRESENTS HIM WITH A DREAM HE CAN NEVER EXPERIENCE!
EVERYTHING THAT DOESN'T SHOW MAN AS HE TRULY IS, AS "OUR MAN" HAS REVEALED, SHOULD BE DESTROYED! IF MAN SEES NO ILLUSIONS, NOTHING THAT HE CANNOT HAVE, HE WILL HAVE NO FRUSTRATIONS!
MAN WILL ONLY BE HAPPY WHEN HE RECOGNIZES AND ACCEPTS THE FACT THAT HE IS A HELPLESS, MEANINGLESS SPECK IN A NEVER-ENDING UNIVERSE!
SOMEONE SHOULD DESTROY ALL THAT HEROIC EVIL! TO RID IT FROM THE SIGHT OF MAN FOREVER! THEN THE WORKS OF TRUE ART LIKE MY SCULPTURES WILL ALLOW MAN TO KNOW AND EXPERIENCE HIS TRUE NATURE.
I...I FEEL IT IN ME...THE COMMAND! I...I MUST BE THE ONE WHO WILL SHOW MAN THE WAY! I WILL SMASH THOSE HEROIC IDOLS!...
...DRESSED AS "OUR MAN", I WILL FREE MANKIND OF THE DEMONS THAT POSSESS HIS HEART AND CORRUPT HIS SOUL!
ONCE RID OF HIS HEROIC SYMBOLS, NO MAN WILL EVER FEEL LESS WORTHY OF OTHERS...FOR THERE WILL BE NOTHING TO LOOK UP TO...AND NO MAN WILL HAVE TO STRUGGLE ENDLESSLY AND USELESSLY TO TRY TO ACHIEVE THE UNATTAINABLE! HE WILL FIND TRUE HAPPINESS AND PEACE WITH HIMSELF!


AS TIME PASSES ...
THIS WILL BE THE LAST NIGHT ON GUARD, TRACEY. THE EXHIBIT MOVES TOMORROW!
EVER SINCE THAT RUN IN OVER THE STATUE, I'VE BEEN KEEPING AN EYE ON THE MUSEUM.
I MAY BE OVERLY CONCERNED, BUT IF ANYTHING HAPPENED TO THAT ART, ESPECIALLY "THE UNCONQUERED"...
WELL, IT'S WORTH THE LOSS OF SLEEP TO BE CERTAIN NOTHING DOES HAPPEN!
I WOULDN'T PUT IT PAST THOSE TYPES FROM TRYING AGAIN TO WRECK IT...TO THEM...NOTHING HAS ANY VALUE...NOT EVEN THEMSELVES!
OKAY, BUG! UP YOU GO, OUT OF SIGHT!
THAT WILL DO IT! THIS IS THE MOST REWARDING VIGIL ANYONE EVER HAD!
I MAY HAVE CONVINCED MYSELF OF THE POSSIBILITY OF TROUBLE JUST SO I COULD KEEP SEEING "THE UNCONQUERED"!
WHA...IT'S THE "OUR MAN" STATUE...OR SOMEONE DRESSED UP LIKE IT!
THE BLUE BEETLE! HE SAW ME...BUT HE'S ONE OF *THEM!*
HE DARES TO SET HIMSELF UP AS A GOD! HE IS WORSE THAN HEROIC ART...HE'S TRYING TO BE A HERO...TO BE BETTER THAN EVERYONE ELSE!

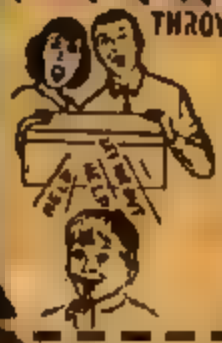
WHAT'S THE GAG, FELLA?...WHOA... I SEE, THE JOKE'S ON ME!
I'LL DESTROY HIS POSE! HE'LL SEE HE'S NO BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE!
OOH! ARMOR PLATED, HUH! SO I CAN'T SLUG IT OUT WITH YOU!
HE CAN'T HURT ME, AND HE KNOWS IT!
HE'LL HAVE TO QUIT, TO GIVE UP AND I'LL EXPOSE HIS HEROIC POSE!
THIS GUY'S STRONG AS A BULL AND FAST...BUT HE'S WILD!
I'LL KEEP PRESSING HIM ...TRY TO SET HIM UP SO I CAN KNOCK HIM OFF BALANCE!
WHY DOES HE KEEP FIGHTING ME! HE SHOULD RUN! HE CAN'T WIN!
I HATE TO TELL YOU YOUR BUSINESS BUT YOU'RE MISSING A LOT.
OOFF!...CAN'T DUCK THEM ALL...BUT THIS ONE'S AT THE WRONG TIME AND PLACE!
HIS EVIL HEROICS KEEP HIM TRYING TO ACHIEVE THE IMPOSSIBLE!
THE FOOL STILL TRIES TO OVERCOME HIS FATE, TO STRUGGLE AGAINST THE LAWS OF DESTINY!
I'LL MAKE A GRAB FOR HIM WHEN HE TRIES TO BREAK MY HOLD!
THE FORCES THAT RULE HAVE DECIDED YOU WILL NEVER AGAIN INSPIRE ANYONE TO POISON THEIR HEARTS.
WHA-
A GUARD IS INVESTIGATING THE NOISE! WHEN HE FINDS THE EX-HERO'S BODY, THE POLICE WILL BE ALL OVER THE PLACE! I MUST LEAVE!
6

IT'S A GOOD THING I SAW THIS IN TIME!
I'VE GOT THE MOMENTUM SO WHILE I'M IN THE SWING OF THINGS... I MIGHT AS WELL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT...
...TO LET IT LIFT ME BACK UP! THE GUARD OVER THERE MUST HAVE SCARED "OUR MAN" AWAY!
I MIGHT BE ABLE TO SPOT HIM FROM THE BUG!
LET'S GO, BUG! I WANT YOU TO KNOW WHO'S INSIDE THAT WALKING DISTORTION OF A MAN!
IF THE MIND BEHIND IT IS AS TWISTED AS THE STATUE IT REPRESENTS, IT CAME TO DESTROY THE ART I WAS WATCHING!
AND AT A NEARBY PARK!
THAT STATUE... IT'S ONE OF THE HEROES OF HUB CITY! I'VE ALWAYS HATED IT!
HEY, LOOK! IT'S "OUR MAN"!
LOOK AT THAT! GO, MAN, GO! SMASH IT, MAN, DOWN WITH PHONEY TRADITIONS! FREE US, MAN!
WE'LL MAKE OUR OWN RULES!
WE DON'T NEED ANY PAST! IT'S HERE AND NOW, MAN!
GO TO IT!

WE'RE WITH YOU, MAN! DOWN WITH THE CHAINS OF CONVENTIONS...OF AUTHORITY! MAN MUST LIVE AS HE FEELS! HA-HA!
WE'RE WITH YOU, MAN!
YIPPE
SMASH AWAY!
GO, MAN, GO! DON'T EVER STOP!
LOOK OUT, LADY!
WHY ARE THEY DOING THAT? WHAT'S GOT INTO THEM!
WHEN THE BUG'S ANTENNA PICKED UP THE COMMOTION, I KNEW WHO HAD TO BE THE CAUSE OF IT!
WHAT'S THAT CREEPY BUG BUTTING IN FOR AND SPOILING OUR FUN! HEY! HE'S ATTACKING "OUR MAN!"
YOU SEEM TO GET YOUR KICKS OUT OF DESTROYING. I GET MINE FROM KICKING THE DESTROYERS.
IT CAN'T BE! I DEFEATED HIM! WHY? HOW COULD HE COME BACK AFTER ME?
BEAT IT, BUG!
STOP THAT! YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO PICK ON "OUR MAN!" YOU BRUTE! SAVAGE!
WHAT MYSTIC POWERS DOES THE BLUE BEETLE POSSESS?
COME ON, WE'LL TEACH THAT BUG SOME RESPECT FOR OTHERS!
SMASH THAT INSECT! HELP "OUR MAN!"

HERE'S A WHOLE TREASURE CHEST OF FUN

THROW YOUR VOICE



Throw your voice into trunks behind doors everywhere. Instrument fits in your mouth out of sight. Fool teacher friends family Free book on "How to Become a Ventriloqu st.
No 137 25c

MAGIC CARDS

Deck is marked and stripped. Can be read from the back but looks like ordinary deck With instructions for 10 terrific tricks
No. 193 $1.98

JACK POT BANK

Dime-operating Jack Pot Bank works like the one armed bandit in Las Vegas Deposit the dime and spin the hand e. Reels spin and look like the real stuff Dimes are removable Should not be used for gambling purposes.
No 2980 1.98

SURPRISE PACKAGE

Are you willing to take a chance? We won't tell you what you get but because you're willing to gamble, we'll give you more than your money's worth
No. 673 Only 50c

SKIN HEAD WIG

Most people try to grow hair. This is just the opposite. Made of flesh toned latex will fit all heads. For the executive that would like to change his appearance
A35 $1.00

FIRES WITH LOUD BANG!

Metal Model of 24 Pound

NAVAL CANNON

Actua ly Shoots Only

$2.98

4 x 10 ng

Use for Celebrations Starting Races Don't Duck at on Authentic detailed re production of 18th Century 24 Pounder Naval Cannon from the days of wooden ships and iron men Shoots 4 3/4in Bullets with 1 loud Bang that will stun it and amaze your friends. Reusable and safe 10 day money back guarantee Not suitable for C ass 07 00 each All rights Illustration 5 00
No 97

BOOMERANG

Something new in target throwing In case you miss, it comes right back to you, and bingo you're set to fire again More fun than a barrel of monkeys
No. 141 75c

SMOKE BOMB

Light one and watch the column of thick white smoke rise to the ceiling and expand into a dense cloud Sensational surprising effect
No 971 20c

JOY BUZZER

Most popular joke novelty in years Wind up and wear it like a ring. When you shake hands, it almost raises the victim off his feet with a "shocking sensation. Absolutely harmless
No. 230 Only 30c

20 COURSE HOME STUDY PROGRAM

KARATE, JU-JITSU

Only $1.00

JUDO, BOXING, SAVATE,

Isometric Muscle Building, Endurance Stunts.

Here is what you get!

- 20 best KARATE Blows and Chops
- SAVATE French foot fighting
- Nerve center anatomy chart
- JUDO throws, Jiu jitsu holds
- Isometric muscle building course
- Endurance Exercises and lots more

FREE

Karate Practice Dummy and Nerve Center Chart
Item No. 73

TRICK BLACK SOAP

Ordinary looking piece of soap. Victim washes face and gets blacker and blacker When he gets a look in the mirror, he'll be shocked Harmless.
No. 575 Only 25c

MONEY MEATH

Insert a blank piece of paper turn the knob and ... OUT COMES A REAL DOLLAR BILL! Insert the dollar and it changes to a $5 then the $5 changes to $10.
A135 1.25

SECRET SPY SCOPE

Pen Size——Clips On Your Pocket-6 Power Magnifier
6-power wide field magnifier is cleverly concealed in a pen-sized pocket scope Item No. F58 $1.98

SECRET BOOK SAFE

With combination lock only you can open.

Looks like any Book so no one would think to look for valuables in it Securely locked by combination only you know because you yourself have set it Tough under-structure is covered with simulated leather binding. 75c $1

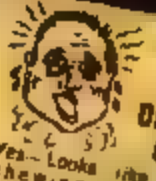
EXHAUST WHISTLE

Just slip it into the exhaust pipe of your friend's car then watch him when he starts the engine The howls and noises will make him think the motor's about to blow up or fall apart —While you roar with laughter
No. FY83 50c

WHOOPEE CUSHION

Place on a chair under a cushion then watch the fun when someone sits down! It gives forth embarrassing noises. Made of rubber and inflatable A scream
No. 247 90c

ONION GUM

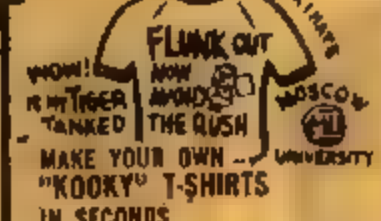


Yes—Looks like real chewing gum but tastes like ONIONS! It's too funny! Slices to a deck.
No. 287 25c

X-RAY SPECS

An Hilarious Optical Illusion $1.00

Scientific optical principle really works Imagine you put on the X Ray Specs and hold your hand in front of you You seem to be able to look right through the flesh and see the bones underneath Look at your friend is that really his body you "see" under his clothes? Loads of laughs and fun at parties
No. FL7 $1.00



MAKE YOUR OWN "KOOKY" T-SHIRTS IN SECONDS

All you do is lay the transfer on press down with a hot iron and presto! you'll have a crowd stopping "zany" shirt in colors, too Each transfer will transform several shirts Can be washed of course.
Item No 338 Any two transfers $1.00. All 4 transfers $1.75

Homer House Prod. Corp. Dept.278GK42
Lynbrook, N.Y. 11563

Rush me the items listed below. If I am not 100% satisfied, I may return any part of my purchase after 10 days Free Trial for full refund of purchase price

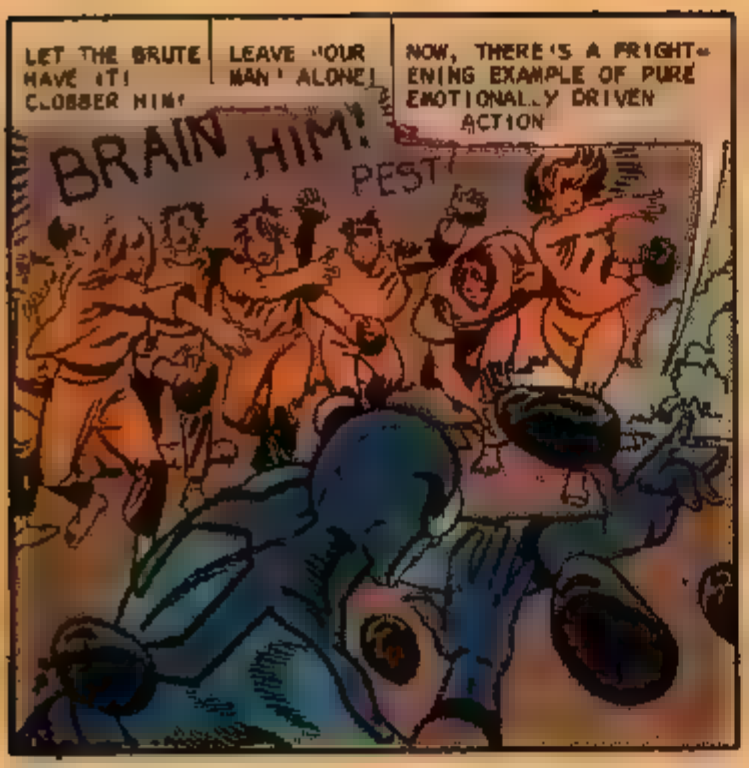
Item	Name of Item	How Many	Total Price

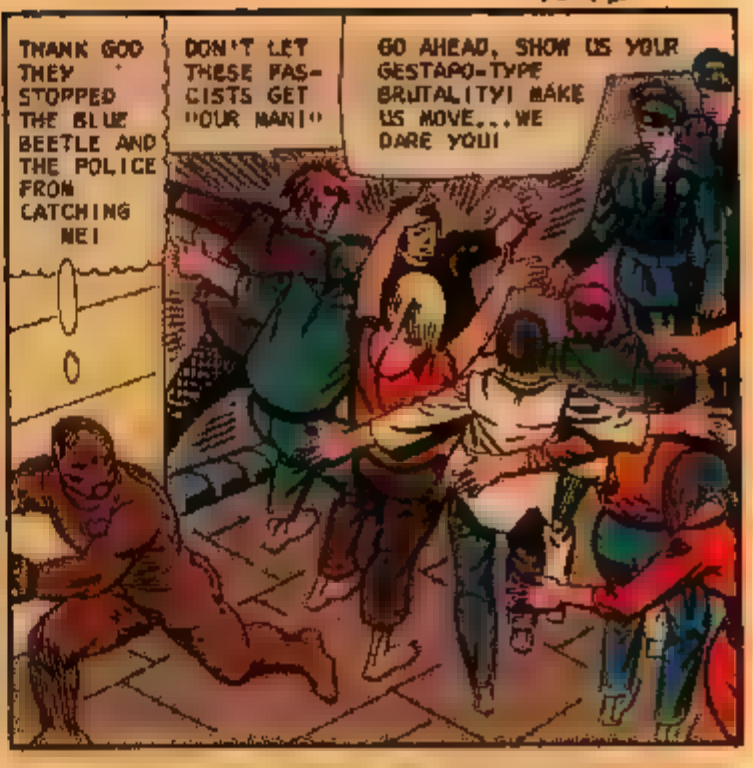
☐ I enclose in full payment. Same guarantee
☐ Send C.O.D. I will pay postman on delivery plus C.O.D. and shipping charges

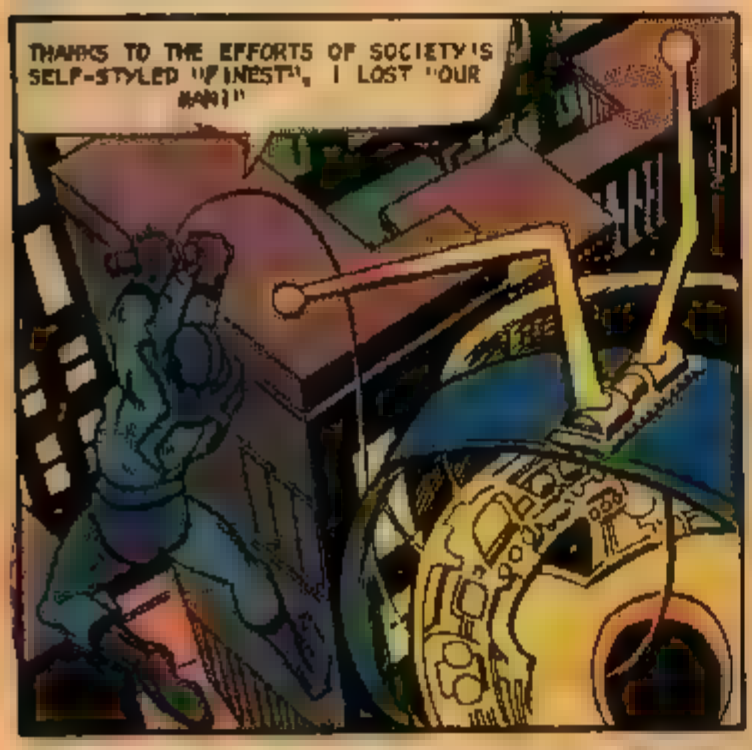
Name

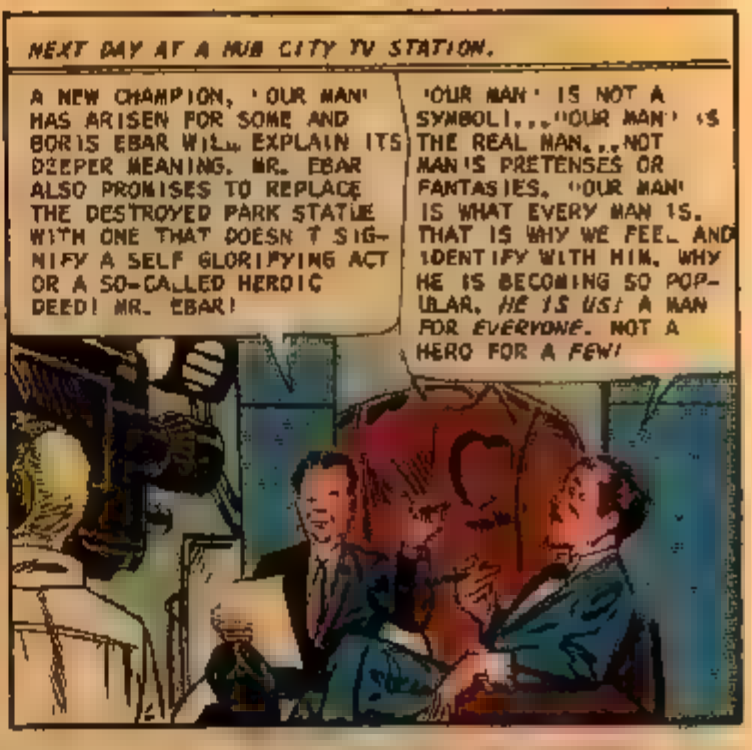
Address Zip

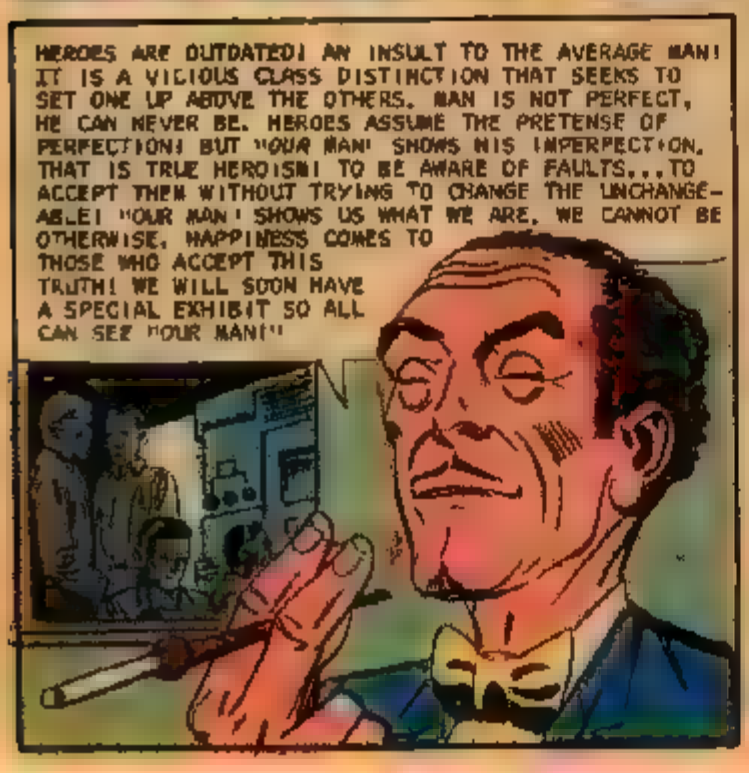
N.Y. State residents please add 2% sales tax. Sorry, we cannot ship orders for less than $1.00 Kindly add 15c for postage and handling to all orders

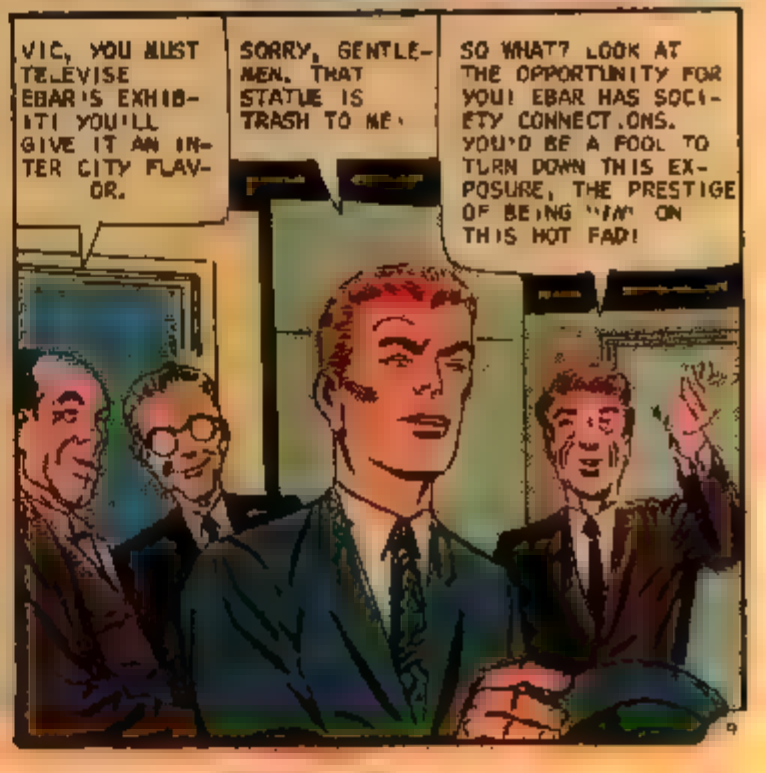

LET THE BRUTE HAVE IT! CLOBBER HIM!
LEAVE 'OUR MAN' ALONE!
NOW, THERE'S A FRIGHTENING EXAMPLE OF PURE EMOTIONALLY DRIVEN ACTION
BRAIN HIM!
PEST!


THANK GOD THEY STOPPED THE BLUE BEETLE AND THE POLICE FROM CATCHING ME!
DON'T LET THESE FASCISTS GET "OUR MAN!"
GO AHEAD, SHOW US YOUR GESTAPO-TYPE BRUTALITY! MAKE US MOVE...WE DARE YOU!


THANKS TO THE EFFORTS OF SOCIETY'S SELF-STYLED "FINEST", I LOST "OUR MAN!"


NEXT DAY AT A HUB CITY TV STATION.
A NEW CHAMPION, 'OUR MAN' HAS ARISEN FOR SOME AND BORIS EBAR WILL EXPLAIN ITS DEEPER MEANING. MR. EBAR ALSO PROMISES TO REPLACE THE DESTROYED PARK STATUE WITH ONE THAT DOESN'T SIGNIFY A SELF GLORIFYING ACT OR A SO-CALLED HEROIC DEED! MR. EBAR!
'OUR MAN' IS NOT A SYMBOL!...'OUR MAN' IS THE REAL MAN...NOT MAN'S PRETENSES OR FANTASIES. 'OUR MAN' IS WHAT EVERY MAN IS. THAT IS WHY WE FEEL AND IDENTIFY WITH HIM. WHY HE IS BECOMING SO POPULAR. *HE IS US!* A MAN FOR *EVERYONE*. NOT A HERO FOR A *FEW!*

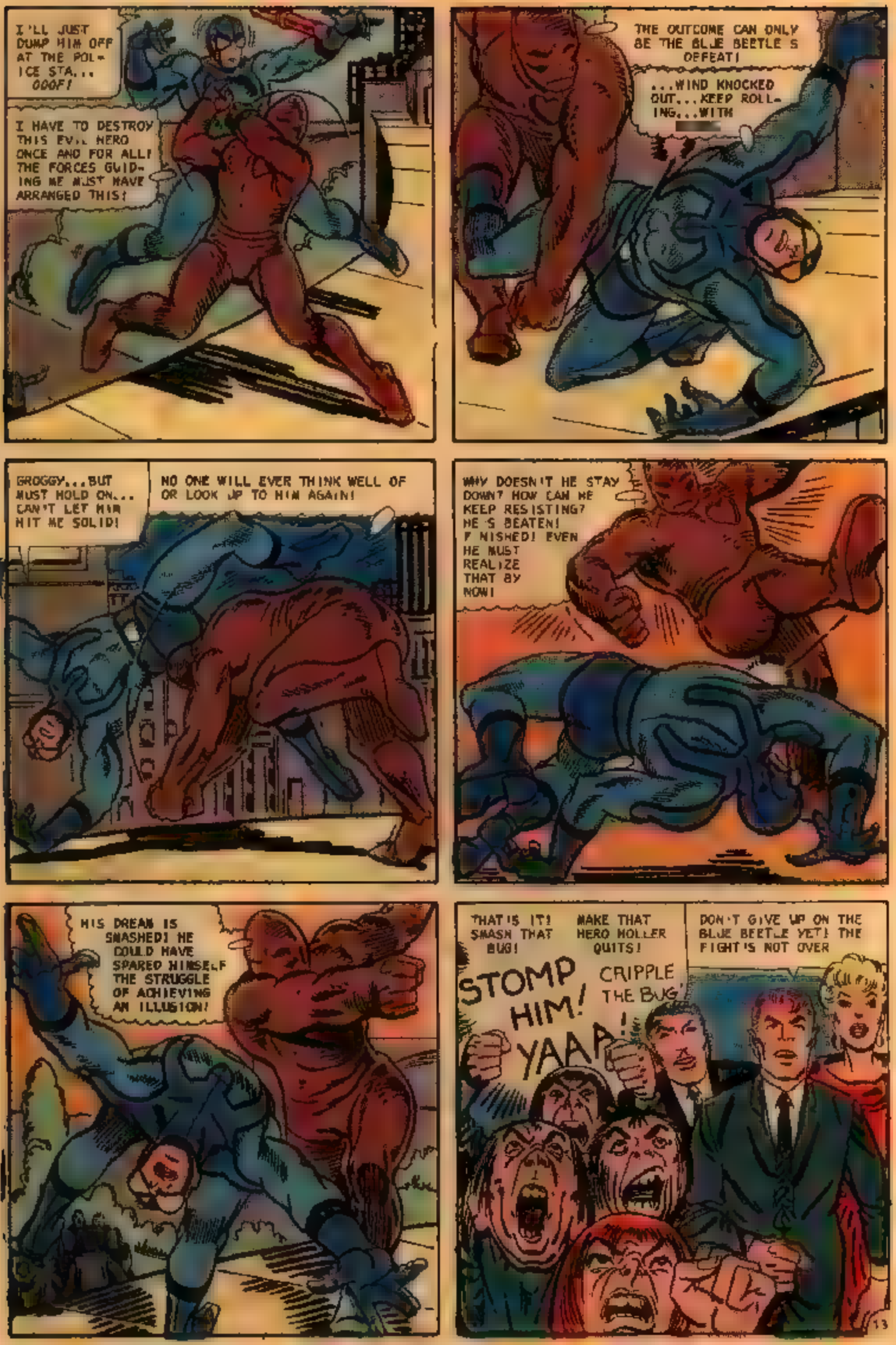

HEROES ARE OUTDATED! AN INSULT TO THE AVERAGE MAN! IT IS A VICIOUS CLASS DISTINCTION THAT SEEKS TO SET ONE UP ABOVE THE OTHERS. MAN IS NOT PERFECT, HE CAN NEVER BE. HEROES ASSUME THE PRETENSE OF PERFECTION! BUT "OUR MAN" SHOWS HIS IMPERFECTION. THAT IS TRUE HEROISM! TO BE AWARE OF FAULTS...TO ACCEPT THEM WITHOUT TRYING TO CHANGE THE UNCHANGEABLE! "OUR MAN" SHOWS US WHAT WE ARE, WE CANNOT BE OTHERWISE. HAPPINESS COMES TO THOSE WHO ACCEPT THIS TRUTH! WE WILL SOON HAVE A SPECIAL EXHIBIT SO ALL CAN SEE "OUR MAN!"


VIC, YOU MUST TELEVISE EBAR'S EXHIBIT! YOU'LL GIVE IT AN INTER CITY FLAVOR.
SORRY, GENTLEMEN. THAT STATUE IS TRASH TO ME!
SO WHAT? LOOK AT THE OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU! EBAR HAS SOCIETY CONNECTIONS. YOU'D BE A FOOL TO TURN DOWN THIS EXPOSURE, THE PRESTIGE OF BEING "IN" ON THIS HOT FAD!

AT LAST WE HAVE PROOF WE ARE THE TRUE WAY OF LIFE. 'OUR MAN'S" STATUE, EBAR S SPEECH, EVERYONE 'S SAY·NG SO, EXCEPT THOSE IDIOTS WHO DON'T REALIZE A MAN CAN FEEL BETTER THAN HE CAN THINK!
WE'RE GOING TO COMMUNICATE OUR SPIRIT TO 'OUR MAN TO GIVE HIM STRENGTH TO OVERCOME THE DISBE- LIEVERS!
...AND I AM MERELY AN INSTRU- MENT OF SOME UNKNOWN FORCE. I CANNOT QUESTION IT...I CAN ONLY OBEY ITS COMMANDS.
GET YOUR HEART AND IDENTIFY WITH 'OUR MAN!" SHOW YOU BELIEVE IN HIM!
YEAH. AND IT ALSO SHOWS WHAT YOU DON T KNOW! LET'S GET AWAY FROM HERE, KATE!
FREE! SEE "OUR MAN" EXHIBIT PRESENTED BY THE COMMITTEE TO PROTECT THE COMMON MAN / BOBS BEAR PRES.
IT IS BETTER FOR MAN TO IDENTIFY WITH WEAK- NESS. IT GIVES HIM A HUMBLE, TRUER PER- SPECTIVE OF MAN.
YEAH, THIS RAT RACE OF ALWAYS PROV- ING YOURSELF IS INSANE! IT SEEMS OUR MISS EFFICI- ENCY DOESN'T AGREE!
YOU WANT TO PULL A VIC- IOUS SWITCH! YOU SHEAR THE BEST AS UNWORTHY SO YOU HAVE AN EXCUSE TO REMAIN AS LOUSY AS YOU ARE!
...AND NO ONE WILL EVER BE PERFECT SO WHY KNOCK YOURSELF OUT TRYING, WHY KID YOURSELF? WE ARE ALL LIKE 'OUR MAN!"
I SEE! THE DOCTORS THAT TREAT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY...THE PEO- PLE THAT MAKE YOUR DRUGS,... BUILD YOUR CARS...ANYONE WHO'S ACTION AFFECTS THE LIVES OF OTHERS SHOULDN'T TRY TO DO THEIR BEST. WHY BOTHER, HUH!
YA, BOY. I CAN IDENTIFY WITH 'OUR MAN' BUT I CAN'T WITH THOSE BRAINY GUYS WHO THINK THEY KNOW IT ALL!
THE ONLY GOOD MAN IS ONE WHO HAS FAULTS, LIKE "OUR MAN." ANY PERSON WITHOUT FAULTS WOULD BE A DISGUST NG SPECTACLE!
THAT'S WHY YOU'RE AL- WAYS COM- PLAINING ABOUT STUPID SALES CLERKS, IDIOTIC DRIVERS AND DUMB POLITI - CIANS? YOU'RE KNOCKING YOUR GOOD MAN'S VIRTUES!
YEAH, I DIG A GUY THAT MAKES MISTAKES...YOU KNOW HE'S HUMAN!
YOU'LL BE A SUPER HERO WITH NO LEGS BUT I'LL G VE YOU SUPER POW- ERS SO YOU WON'T NEED THEM AND EVERYONE WILL FEEL SORRY FOR YOU!
THAT'S STUPID! WHY WRECK ME IF YOU CAN G VE ME POWERS!

TED, WHEN IS SOMEONE GOING TO ANSWER HIM PROPERLY!?
THE BEST WAY WOULD BE TO PRESENT A BETTER EXAMPLE! I'VE GOT AN IDEA, COVER FOR ME!
WE'VE CONSIDERED THE SAME IDEA, TED WE HAVE THE ART FOR AN EXHIBIT BUT WE NEED SOMEONE TO PROMOTE IT!
VIC SAGE WOULD BE PERFECT BUT I DON'T KNOW IF HE'S STILL IN THE CITY!
..AND THAT'S IT, SAGE. OUR OWN EXHIBIT, BUT IF YOU'RE LEAVING TODAY WE'LL HAVE TO TRY SOMEONE EL...
I'LL DO IT! JUST LET ME CALL MY STAFF! THEY'LL PINCH HIT FOR ME IN CROWN CITY!
SAGE, IT'S UNFAIR! IF YOU GO THROUGH WITH THAT COMPETING EXHIBIT, WE'LL SEE THAT YOU LOSE YOUR SPONSORS HERE AND YOUR TV OUTLET!
I DON'T INSIST OR CARE WHAT YOU GENTLEMEN SPONSOR OR EXHIBIT, SO DON'T TELL ME WHAT I MUST DO.
EXHIBIT MAN
IT'S UNAMERICAN, HOLDING THAT EXHIBIT, OURS SHOULD BE THE ONLY ONE. WE OUGHT TO PICKET IT!
I FEEL A COMMAND INSIDE ME! THAT EXHIBIT MUST BE DESTROYED!
ONCE MORE THE FORCES OF DESTINY MOVE ME! THAT EXHIBIT WILL HAVE THE BEST EXAMPLES OF HEROIC ART ...ONCE DESTROYED...THEY'LL NEVER BE REPLACED...THEIR INSPIRATION ENDED!
I FEEL UNWORTHY OF BEING CHOSEN FOR SUCH A TASK, BUT HOW CAN A MERE MAN QUESTION THE MYSTIC FORCES THAT MOVE HIM! I FEEL ITS PRESENCE...THAT PROVES ITS EXISTENCE AND POWER! ALL HAS BEEN DECIDED
HEY! THAT IS 'OUR MAN'! WE GOT TO SPREAD THE WORD
I CAN ONLY BELIEVE, THAT HEROIC ART IS EVIL! I CAN ONLY OBEY...I WILL DESTROY IT!
HEY, EVERYONE! 'OUR MAN' IS GOING TO SMASH THAT HERO EXHIBIT!
OH, MR. EBAR, I SEE IT NOW! TO TAKE PRIDE IN ONE'S SHORTCOMINGS TO BE TRULY HUMAN!
STOP!

IT'S THAT MONSTER! COME ON, WE'VE GOT TO STOP H M!
I'LL HANDLE H M ROUND UP THE GUARDS, THEY RE INVESTIGATING A BOMB SCARE!
THE FOOL! I'VE BEEN CHOSEN TO DESTROY THAT EVIL AND THIS ONE TH NKS HE CAN STOP THE POWERS OF DESTINY!
I HAVE TO KEEP H M AWAY FROM THAT ART AT ALL COSTS
WHY DOES HE IN- SIST ON FIGHTING ...HE CAN'T HURT OR STOP ME!
IF I CAN KNOCK H M OFF BAL- ANCE I CAN KEEP H M DOWN!
THOSE CURSED STATUES BREED HEROICS...HE S POSSESSED BY THEM AND THEIR EVIL SPELL!
I'M LATE, BUT I HAD TO STAY FAR OUT OF SIGHT TO AVOID BEING SPOTTED!
BUT SAGE IS DOING A DARN GOOD JOB OF HOLDING H M OFF
I DON'T WANT TO TAKE H M ON DOWN HERE AND RISK DAMAGING THAT ART, SO UP AND AWAY WE GO!
WHA! HOW DOES THE BEETLE ALWAYS KNOW WHERE AND WHEN I'LL STRIKE??
NOW THERE'S A NEAT WAY OF REMOVING A MENACE!
12

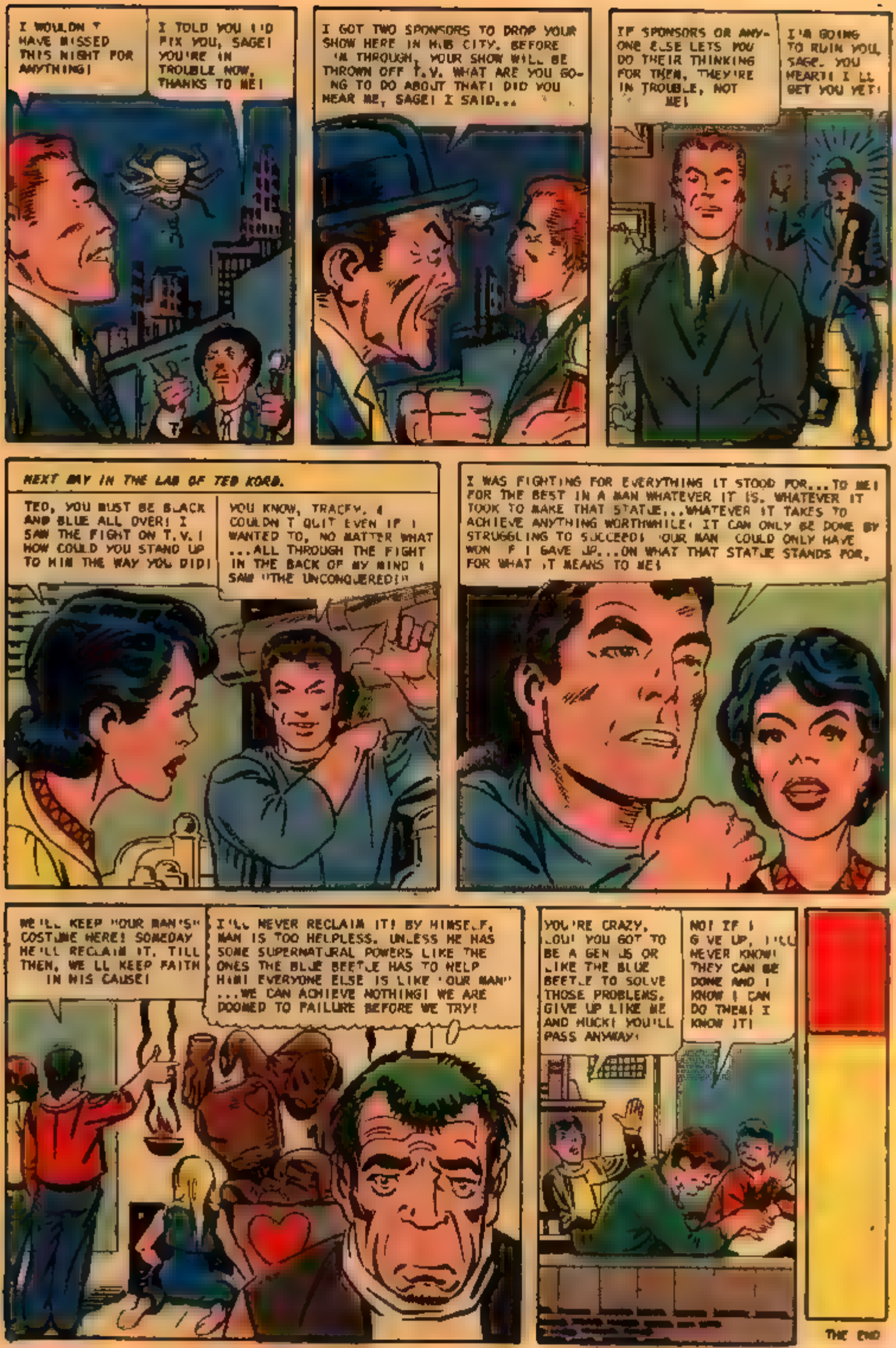

I'LL JUST DUMP HIM OFF AT THE POL- ICE STA... OOOF!
I HAVE TO DESTROY THIS EVIL HERO ONCE AND FOR ALL! THE FORCES GUID- ING ME MUST HAVE ARRANGED THIS!
THE OUTCOME CAN ONLY BE THE BLUE BEETLE'S DEFEAT!
...WIND KNOCKED OUT...KEEP ROLL- ING...WITH
GROGGY...BUT MUST HOLD ON... CAN'T LET HIM HIT ME SOLID!
NO ONE WILL EVER THINK WELL OF OR LOOK UP TO HIM AGAIN!
WHY DOESN'T HE STAY DOWN? HOW CAN HE KEEP RESISTING? HE'S BEATEN! F NISHED! EVEN HE MUST REALIZE THAT BY NOW!
HIS DREAM IS SHASHED! HE COULD HAVE SPARED HIMSELF THE STRUGGLE OF ACHIEVING AN ILLUSION!
THAT IS IT! SMASH THAT BUG!
MAKE THAT HERO HOLLER QUITS!
STOMP HIM!
CRIPPLE THE BUG!
YAAA!
DON'T GIVE UP ON THE BLUE BEETLE YET! THE FIGHT IS NOT OVER
13

CURSE YOU! STAY DOWN! YOU'RE BEAT! GIVE UP YOU MUST GIVE UP!! YOU MUST!
OOOF! AH! MY HEAD S CLEARED ENOUGH FOR BE TO STRIKE BACK!
I HOPE YOU DON T MIND IF I BECOME AN ACTIVE PARTICI- PANT IN THIS CONTEST!
WHA! HE ...HE 'S FIGHTING BACK!
HOW IS IT POSSIBLE??
SINCE SLUG- GING YOU IS NO GOOD... I'LL TRY SOMETHING ELSE!
HE IS NOT HUMAN! NO MERE MAN COULD NOT DO WHAT HE DOES!
I'LL JUST KEEP HIM OFF HIS STRIDE!
UNLESS HE HAS SOME KIND OF MAGICAL POWER THAT HE CALLS UPON TO HELP HIM.
NOW IT 'S TIME TO SHAKE HIM UP!
S JPERNATURAL POWERS THAT I COULD NOT EVEN DREAM OF.
TH S WILL GIVE YOU A NEW PO NT OF VIEW!
D RTY FIGHTER! THAT BUG IS NOT BE ING FAIR!
KICK HIM OFF THE ROOF!
GET HIM!
NOW WE'LL SEE A DIFFERENT FIGHT!

THE FORCES THAT GUIDED ME MUST HAVE ABANDONED ME! I NO LONGER FEEL MY MASTERY OVER THIS EVIL! HELP ME... I NEED YOU!
HE'S STILL STRONG AS EVER, BUT I CAN WEAR HIM DOWN NOW!
I HAVE BEEN HEARD. THEY AID ME AGAIN. NOW I WILL DESTROY HIM!
OOF! I CAN'T AVOID ALL HIS BLOWS, BUT I'M MORE PREPARED FOR THEM!
THIS THEN, IS THE END OF THE ONE WHO ASPIRES TO BE A HERO...
JUST A GLANCING BLOW AND HE'S IN POSITION!
NO! NO! HE WON'T STAY DEFEATED! HIS POWERS ARE TOO GREAT!
I'M GETTING SO TIRED, WEAK! HE WON'T LET ME REST! HE KEEPS COMING AT ME...HE WON'T LET UP...
HE'S SLOWING DOWN! NOW I HAVE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EVERY OPENING HE GIVES ME!
'OUR MAN' NEEDS HELP! THAT BLUE BEETLE IS TRYING TO PUT SOMETHING OVER ON HIM. WE GOT TO STOP THAT BUG! NOW I GOT AN IDEA.
YOU CAN COUNT ON US. WHAT DO YOU WANT US TO DO?!

THAT'S IT... KEEP PUMPING!
HE'S PLAYING WITH ME!...HE MUST HAVE BEEN DOING IT ALL ALONG!
I'M SO WEAK, THE FORCES THAT ONCE GUIDED ME HAVE NOW DESERTED ME! I...I HAVE PROVEN UNWORTHY OF THEM! THIS IS MY PUNISHMENT!
I AM NOW A MERE MAN AGAINST ONE WHO TRULY HAS SUPERNATURAL POWERS. I NEVER HAD A CHANCE AGAINST HIM! I NEVER HAD A CHANCE FOR ANYTHING!
HE'S SLOWING DOWN!
WHY FIGHT ON.. I WAS DOOMED TO DEFEAT FROM THE START! EVEN WITH POWERS. HOW COULD I HOPE TO ACHIEVE ANYTHING. IT...IT'S AN ILLUSION!
WHAT...NOW HE TAKES HIS REVENGE ON ME! NO, I COULDN'T HELP MYSELF! IT WASN'T MY FAULT...SOMETHING MADE ME DO IT I HAD NO CONTROL!
NOW A FEW SPINS ...
I SURRENDER. DON'T DESTROY ME! PLEASE! I DIDN'T MEAN IT!
WELL, IT DOES TALK!! I WAS BEGINNING TO THINK YOU DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T HAVE ANY BRAINS... COME TO THINK OF IT...I'M RIGHT!
HEY, WHAT'S THE DEAL? WHAT ARE YOU UP TO??
RELAX, HIRED HELP! WE JUST WANT TO TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT A CREEP WHO HIRES OUT AS A GUARD!
I GOT HIS GUN!

THAT SELF-MADE IDIOT! HE'S REFUSED TO USE HIS MIND FOR SO LONG HE HAS NOTHING TO CHECK HIS IMPULSES!
OKAY, BUG! TAKE THAT!
HEY! DON'T THEY KNOW THERE'S NEVER BEEN AN OPEN SEASON ON PEOPLE!
BECAUSE YOU DELIBERATELY TURNED YOURSELF INTO A MENTAL CRIPPLE ...THAT DOESN'T EXCUSE YOUR ACTIONS!
OWW! WHAT YA DO THAT FOR?! I'LL KILL...
SINCE YOU WON'T THINK I'LL TELL YOU! YOUR FEELINGS DON'T DETERMINE ANYTHING! ESPECIALLY THE LIFE OF A HUMAN BEING
WHO ARE YOU TO TELL ME... OWW!
NOW WHERE DID "OUR MAN" SLIP AWAY TO?
I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF THIS COSTUME! WHY DID I HAVE TO GET MIXED UP IN THIS ANYWAY?!
WE'VE GOT TO FIND "OUR MAN" BEFORE THE POLICE DO!
HEY, LOOK! HIS COSTUME!
HOORAY HE GOT AWAY
IT'S A MIRACLE! DID! THE FORCES THAT GOT ME MIXED UP IN THIS MUST HAVE TAKEN PITY ON ME!
SO HE GOT AWAY ...BUT I DON'T THINK ANYONE WILL EVER SEE HIM AGAIN!


I WOULDN'T HAVE MISSED THIS NIGHT FOR ANYTHING!
I TOLD YOU I'D FIX YOU, SAGE! YOU'RE IN TROUBLE NOW, THANKS TO ME!
I GOT TWO SPONSORS TO DROP YOUR SHOW HERE IN HUB CITY. BEFORE I'M THROUGH, YOUR SHOW WILL BE THROWN OFF T.V. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT THAT! DID YOU HEAR ME, SAGE! I SAID...
IF SPONSORS OR ANYONE ELSE LETS YOU DO THEIR THINKING FOR THEM, THEY'RE IN TROUBLE, NOT ME!
I'M GOING TO RUIN YOU, SAGE. YOU HEAR?! I'LL GET YOU YET!
NEXT DAY IN THE LAB OF TED KORB.
TED, YOU MUST BE BLACK AND BLUE ALL OVER! I SAW THE FIGHT ON T.V.! HOW COULD YOU STAND UP TO HIM THE WAY YOU DID!
YOU KNOW, TRACEY, I COULDN'T QUIT EVEN IF I WANTED TO, NO MATTER WHAT ...ALL THROUGH THE FIGHT IN THE BACK OF MY MIND I SAW "THE UNCONQUERED!"
I WAS FIGHTING FOR EVERYTHING IT STOOD FOR...TO ME! FOR THE BEST IN A MAN WHATEVER IT IS. WHATEVER IT TOOK TO MAKE THAT STATUE...WHATEVER IT TAKES TO ACHIEVE ANYTHING WORTHWHILE! IT CAN ONLY BE DONE BY STRUGGLING TO SUCCEED! "OUR MAN" COULD ONLY HAVE WON IF I GAVE UP...ON WHAT THAT STATUE STANDS FOR, FOR WHAT IT MEANS TO ME!
WE'LL KEEP "OUR MAN'S" COSTUME HERE! SOMEDAY HE'LL RECLAIM IT. TILL THEN, WE'LL KEEP FAITH IN HIS CAUSE!
I'LL NEVER RECLAIM IT! BY HIMSELF, MAN IS TOO HELPLESS. UNLESS HE HAS SOME SUPERNATURAL POWERS LIKE THE ONES THE BLUE BEETLE HAS TO HELP HIM! EVERYONE ELSE IS LIKE "OUR MAN" ...WE CAN ACHIEVE NOTHING! WE ARE DOOMED TO FAILURE BEFORE WE TRY!
YOU'RE CRAZY, LOU! YOU GOT TO BE A GENIUS OR LIKE THE BLUE BEETLE TO SOLVE THOSE PROBLEMS. GIVE UP LIKE ME AND MUCK! YOU'LL PASS ANYWAY!
NO! IF I GIVE UP, I'LL NEVER KNOW! THEY CAN BE DONE AND I KNOW I CAN DO THEM! I KNOW IT!
THE END

"PRISONER 2222."

To The Honorable John Macready,
Chairman,
State Parole Commission.

Dear Sir:

Because of the insistence of the Press I feel the time has come to issue a complete statement in regard to the application of Walter Freders, known as Prisoner 2222, for a parole. At the same time the Governor in studying the possibility of giving this man a complete pardon. The examining commission has authorized me to inform you that we feel it best that all facts be given to the public. We are well aware that most people will not believe the strange events involved in this case. We can understand this attitude because every member of the examining commission, including myself, were of the same opinion. Briefly: It just could not be! But since it is-the best we can do is to live with the facts.

We need not discuss the crime of which Walter Freders was found guilty by a competent court and jury and sentenced to a term of not less than thirty years nor more than thirty five. At the time he entered the state prison his education had not passed beyond the sixth grade of elementary school. His I. Q., as tested by the prison psychologist was found to be 73. His physical condition was excellent. The task assigned him was to bail the bundles of scrap paper sent out of the prison.

On January 12, of this present year, at exactly five minutes after nine, he collapsed. He was taken to the prison hospital and was in a coma for three weeks. When he regained consciousness he at once demanded to know why he was in the hospital. Especially since he had an appointment at the State University with several members of the U.N. He informed us that he was Professor Robert Meli. I need not tell you that Professor Meli was the greatest linguist in this country with his specialty being the Far Eastern languages.

On January 12, of this present year, at exactly five minutes after nine, Professor Meli died of a heart attack. His sister, Mrs. Marie Donnely, has testified that her brother repeatedly stated that should he die, he would bequeath his brilliant brain to somebody who needed a second chance at life. She has informed us that until the present event was brought to her attention, she always thought this to be part of her brother's sly humor.

Mrs. Marie Donnely spoke to Prisoner 2222 three times in our presence. She asked him questions of a intimate nature and he gave her the correct answers. She is convinced that her brother did exactly what he promised: His brain is now in the body of Walter Freders. Dr. Mizu Akai had two long conversations with the prisoner in Japanese. Then he wrote a short note in Japanese which the prisoner read aloud and translated. Dr. Hu Wang, did the same in Mandarin. In addition he talked about the ancient Chinese classics with the prisoner. Eight other linguists then came and each was convinced that Walter Freders somehow was the greatest specialists in his field.

It is the "somehow" that bothered all of us. There is no satisfactory theory by which we can explain this situation. Can a man who knows he is about to die bequeath his brain to somebody else? And by the grant of gift, also give the recipient his identity? Professor Hans Gelber, the Anthropologist, has presented us with records showing that such a belief has been widespread in the past. And even now there are people who believe that they will come back after death in another identity. The following question has been raised: Can Prisoner 2222, Walter Freders, now with the identity of Professor Robert Meli, upon his death, transfer his brain? We do not know the answer.

We recommend that the parole be granted. Arrangements have been made for Walter Freders to do work in the field of linguists. We are willing to concede that it may be best that he change his name legally to Robert Meli. Mrs. Marie Donnely suggested this to us and further added that she is willing to recognize him as her brother.

When information is given to the Press, we feel it best to have the various linguistic specialists present so that they may then demonstrate beyond a reasonable doubt that the identity of one man has "somehow" been given to another man. And that in view of this transference of identity, the state feels it best to release the man so concerned in this supernatural trans-

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Thomas Leroy,
Chairman, Examining Commission

****

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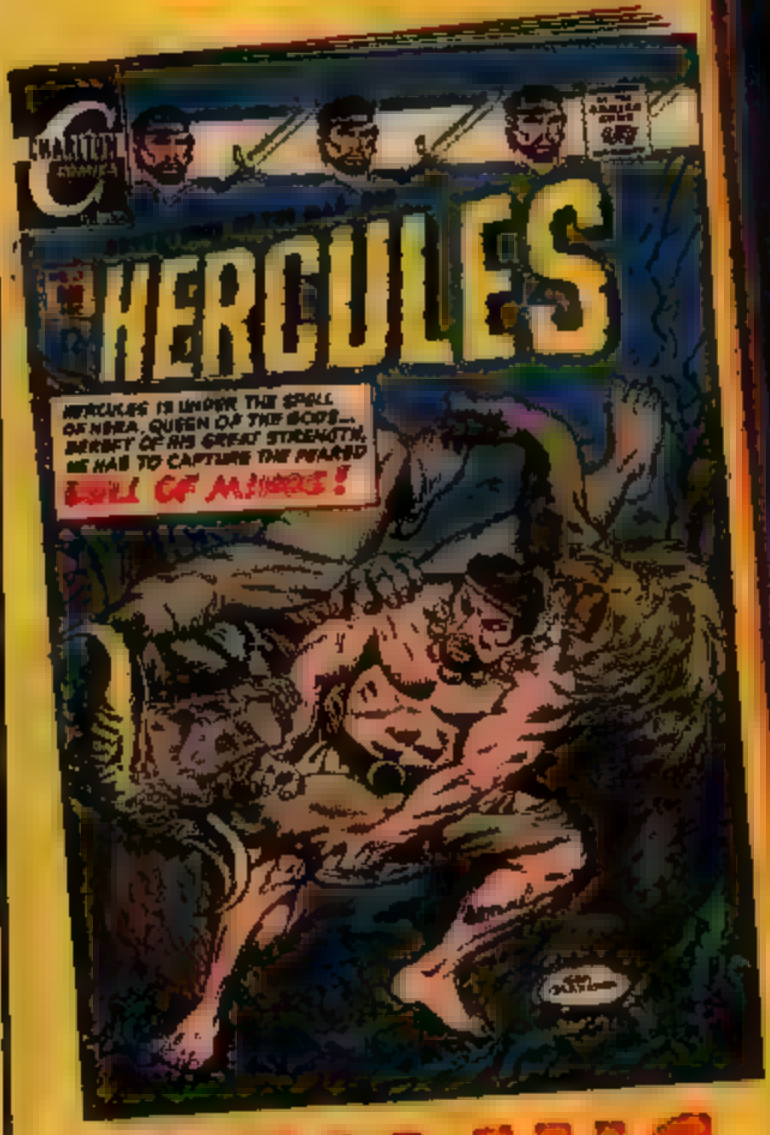
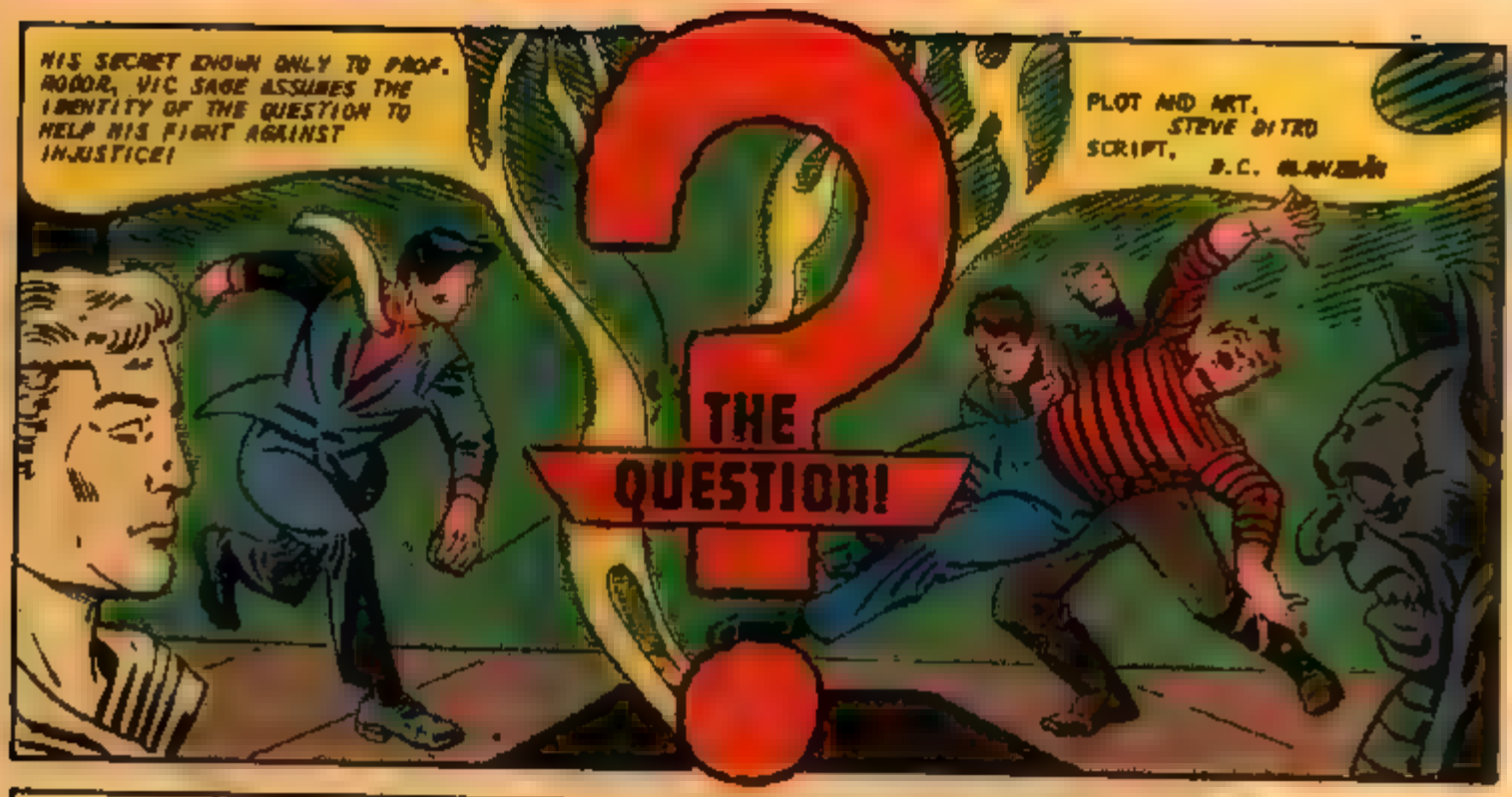
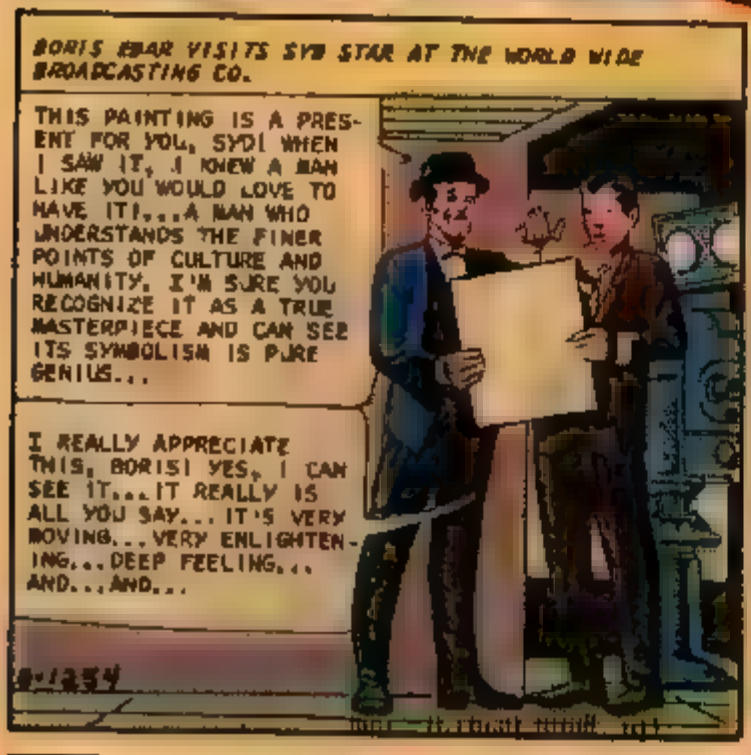
A STARTLING VIEW FROM THE GODS

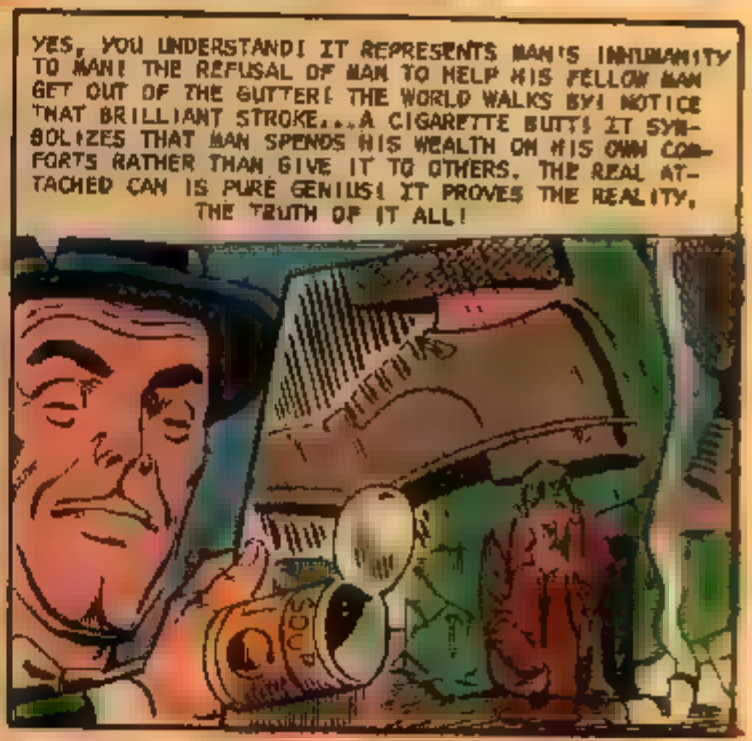

CHARLTON COMICS
HERCULES
HERCULES IS UNDER THE SPELL OF NEBA, QUEEN OF THE GODS... BEREFT OF HIS GREAT STRENGTH, HE HAS TO CAPTURE THE FEARED SKULL OF MIMIR!

DYNAMIC HERCULES

PUSHING HIGH IN THE ENDLESS, SKY TO UN-SUSPECTED DESTINY


HIS SECRET KNOWN ONLY TO PROF. ROSOR, VIC SAGE ASSUMES THE IDENTITY OF THE QUESTION TO HELP HIS FIGHT AGAINST INJUSTICE!
PLOT AND ART, STEVE DITKO
SCRIPT, D.C. GREENBERG
THE QUESTION!


BORIS BAR VISITS SYD STAR AT THE WORLD WIDE BROADCASTING CO.
THIS PAINTING IS A PRESENT FOR YOU, SYD! WHEN I SAW IT, I KNEW A MAN LIKE YOU WOULD LOVE TO HAVE IT!...A MAN WHO UNDERSTANDS THE FINER POINTS OF CULTURE AND HUMANITY. I'M SURE YOU RECOGNIZE IT AS A TRUE MASTERPIECE AND CAN SEE ITS SYMBOLISM IS PURE GENIUS...
I REALLY APPRECIATE THIS, BORIS! YES, I CAN SEE IT...IT REALLY IS ALL YOU SAY... IT'S VERY MOVING...VERY ENLIGHTENING...DEEP FEELING... AND...AND...


YES, YOU UNDERSTAND! IT REPRESENTS MAN'S INHUMANITY TO MAN! THE REFUSAL OF MAN TO HELP HIS FELLOW MAN GET OUT OF THE GUTTER! THE WORLD WALKS BY! NOTICE THAT BRILLIANT STROKE...A CIGARETTE BUTT! IT SYMBOLIZES THAT MAN SPENDS HIS WEALTH ON HIS OWN COMFORTS RATHER THAN GIVE IT TO OTHERS. THE REAL ATTACHED CAN IS PURE GENIUS! IT PROVES THE REALITY, THE TRUTH OF IT ALL!

YES, THAT IS THE WAY I SEE IT TOO, BORIS! IF THERE IS ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU... JUST LET ME KNOW!
THERE IS ONE THING. IT'S MORE OF A FAVOR TO YOU, IT'S ABOUT AN ANNOUNCER THAT IS A DISGRACE TO YOUR FINE [redacted]

OKAY, BUT I GOT TO SHOW THIS AROUND FIRST, NORA, LOOK AT THE MASTERPIECE I GOT FROM BORIS!
AND I'LL SHOW YOU ONE VIC GAVE ME! WE CAN COMPARE THEM!

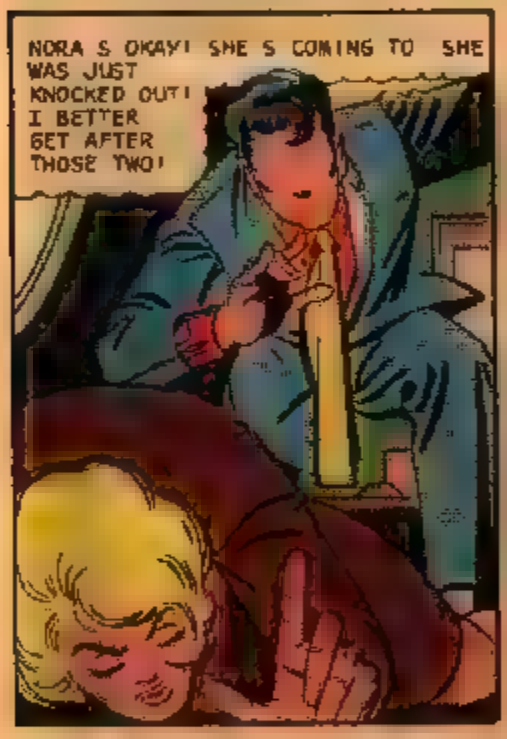
THIS ONE PRESENTS A DIFFERENT VIEW OF MAN! WHAT DO YOU THINK, SYD...BORIS! I'D LIKE TO HEAR IT!

HOW DARE YOU SHOW ME THAT!? I DENOUNCED IT AS CHILDISH, LACING IN ANY AESTHETICS... IT'S AN INSULT TO MAN AND HUMANITY
[redacted] IT INSULT MAN? EXPLAIN IT!
IF YOU CAN'T FEEL IT, THEN YOU'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND! YOU CAN'T EXPLAIN THE HUMAN HEART HOW COULD ANYONE FEEL ANYTHING BUT DISGUST ABOUT THAT... THAT TRASH!
YOU SHOULD LISTEN TO BORIS, NORA. HE KNOWS! HIS REPUTATION AS AN ART CRITIC IS NOT TO BE QUESTIONED! WHAT DOES SAGE KNOW
YOU... YOU BOUGHT THAT PAINTING BECAUSE I DENOUNCED IT! YOU PUT HER UP TO THAT TO EMBARRASS ME! DIDN'T YOU?
YOU FLATTER YOURSELF! I DON'T BUY ANYTHING TO PLEASE OR DISPLEASE YOU OR ANYONE ELSE! I DECIDE THINGS FOR MYSELF!
SYD, SAGE HAS AN EVIL SOUL! YOU MUST GET RID OF HIM, . ME'LL DESTROY ONE AS HUMANE AS YOU!
DON'T I KNOW IT! BUT TELL ME HOW I CAN DO IT! I TRIED EVERY WAY I COULD TO HAVE HIM FIRED!
LATER... AT ERAR'S APARTMENT!
THAT BLASTED PAINTING! WHY DID SAGE HAVE TO BRING IT INTO MY LIFE AGAIN! I WANTED TO BE THROUGH WITH IT FOREVER! NOW MY MIND WON'T STOP SEEING IT! WHY DID IT HAVE TO EXIST!? WHY WON'T IT LEAVE ME ALONE!?
IT KEEPS ACCUSING ME... IT MAKES ME THINK OF WHEN I FELT LIKE, . NO! I MUST NOT THINK ABOUT THEN! BUT THE PAINTING KEEPS REMINDING ME... I'LL NEVER BE FREE OF IT... UNTIL IT IS DESTROYED! IT MUST BE DESTROYED... IT MUST!
SO, LATER IN A WEST SIDE ALLEY...
...AND WE GET THE OTHER HALF SECTIONS OF THE 500 BUCKS WHEN WE DO THE JOB, OKAY, WHERE DO WE DELIVER THE PAINTING TO YOU?
YOU DON'T! BURN IT! I WANT IT COMPLETELY DESTROYED! WHEN I HEAR IT HAS BEEN TAKEN I'LL MAIL YOU THE OTHER HALF OF THE MONEY! AND DON'T FAIL!
PRESENTLY, AT NORA'S APARTMENT!
DID YOU FORGET SOMETHING, VIC?! WHAT? GET OUT... DON!
NO DAME ORDERS ME! COME ON... LET'S GET THAT PAINTING AND [redacted]
TOO BAD I DIDN'T STAY WITH NORA A LITTLE LONGER, BUT I'M GLAD I FOLLOWED THESE TWO SUSPICIOUS GOONS UP FROM THE ALLEY AND WAS READY AS THE QUESTION!
HEY, WHO?? AAH!
WHAT? WHERE? AAG!
2

GET HIM, BO! I CAN T HOLD... AAH!
HE S LIKE A CRAZY MAN BUT I LL DROP HIM FOR GOOD!

YOU RE THE SCUM THAT LIKES TO HIT WOMEN!
I WON T M SS TH S T ME... L LL AANG!

BEAT IT, BO, WE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE. THIS GUY S TOO WILD FOR US


NORA S OKAY! SHE S COMING TO SHE WAS JUST KNOCKED OUT! I BETTER GET AFTER THOSE TWO!

THEY SPLIT UP BUT TH S ONE W LL DO JUST F NE!

I NEED SOME AN- SWERS AND YOU LL PROV DE THEM! YOU TWO CAME FOR A PAINTING...WHICH ONE? WHO SENT YOU?
I LL SMASH... OOF! LET ME GO! I M NOT TALK NG AND YOU CAN T MAKE ME

I LL RELEASE THE GAS THAT MAKES ME THE QUES- T ON...T WON T AFFECT MY APPEARANCE AND IT W LL GIVE ME THE EFFECT I WANT!
HEY, WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO TO ME? WHAT S TH S STUFF!?? WAIT!
SUIT YOURSELF! THEN YOU WILL NEVER TALK TO ANY ONE AGAIN ...!

TALK BEFORE IT S TOO LATE FOR YOU!
OKAY, IT... IT S A PAINTING OF A GUY STANDING... JAGGED ROCK ALL AROUND. I DON T KNOW WHO HIRED US. I SWEAR DON T!

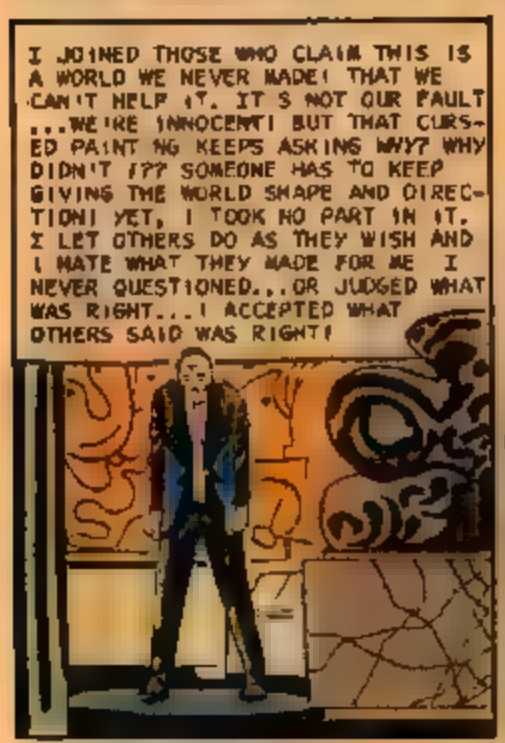
OOH, HE S SO SCARED I COULDN T HOLD ON. BUT HE TOLD ME ENOUGH TO FIGURE OUT WHO S BEHIND IT ...BORIS EBAR. NOW I HAVE TO PROVE IT!
LET GO! I GOTTA GET OUTTA THIS...

LATER, AT THE LAB OF PROF. BODOR.
THAT'S MY IDEA! IF IT CAN BE DONE IT'LL FORCE BORIS' HAND. THEN I'LL BE ABLE TO WATCH HIS NEXT MOVE AND CATCH HIM RED-HANDED!
YES, VIC. IT SHOULDN'T BE ANY PROBLEM
TH S WON'T TAKE LONG! I GOT SOME GLASS TUBING YOU CAN USE AS A BLOW-GUN!
GOOD! I'LL TACK THESE UP AND GET THE SPRAY READY!
THIS SOLUTION WILL DRY IMMEDIATELY! ONCE YOU START THE REACTION, IT WILL BE INSTANTANEOUS. ALSO, COLORLESS AND ODORLESS. YOU HAVE THE PELLETS AND TUBING?
YES, I'M ALL SET!
OH, HOW I WISH I COULD SEE SAGE'S FACE WHEN HE LEARNS THE PAINTING'S GONE! BUT WHEN HELP SYD GET R D OF SAGE, I'LL BE THERE TO HAVE MY LAST LAUGH....SOMEONE AT THE DOOR? MAYBE IT'S SYD!
WHAT...IT'S THE FIGURE FROM THE PAINTING?! HOW??
NO ONE IN THE HALL...WHO??... WHY...??
WHA...IT'S GONE! BUT IT WAS THERE! I SWEAR IT WAS..,WASN'T IT??!!
DID I REALLY SEE IT?? THAT ACCURSED PAINTING WON'T GIVE MY MIND ANY PEACE! WHY WON'T IT LEAVE ME ALONE??
AAIE!! OH, NO! I SEE IT AGAIN... BUT IT CAN'T BE...IT CAN'T!!
4

HOW COULD IT BE HERE?? HOW COULD I SEE IT?? BUT I...I DID! I KNOW I DID!!

IT...IT S GONE! BUT IT WAS THERE! THIS T ME IT WAS...

THAT PAINTING WON'T GIVE ME ANY PEACE OF MIND! IT WON'T LET ME ESCAPE! IT KNOWS I BETRAYED IT!! ...AND I STILL AM...


I JOINED THOSE WHO CLAIM THIS IS A WORLD WE NEVER MADE! THAT WE CAN'T HELP IT. IT S NOT OUR FAULT ...WE'RE INNOCENT! BUT THAT CURSED PAINTING KEEPS ASKING WHY? WHY DIDN'T I?? SOMEONE HAS TO KEEP GIVING THE WORLD SHAPE AND DIRECTION! YET, I TOOK NO PART IN IT. I LET OTHERS DO AS THEY WISH AND I HATE WHAT THEY MADE FOR ME I NEVER QUESTIONED...OR JUDGED WHAT WAS RIGHT...I ACCEPTED WHAT OTHERS SAID WAS RIGHT!

STOP! STOP ACCUSING ME!! I COULDN'T HELP IT! I TRIED AND FAILED! I HAD TO GIVE IN... WHAT ELSE COULD I DO??

HE WON'T BE ABLE TO TAKE MUCH MORE OF THIS.
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! IT'S TOO DIFFICULT...WHY MUST I BE THE ONE?!

GONE. BUT IT WILL BE BACK! AS LONG AS THAT PAINTING EXISTS IT WILL REMIND ME OF WHAT I LET MYSELF BECOME!

I CAN'T WAIT! I MUST DESTROY THAT PAINTING MYSELF! ONLY THEN WILL I FIND PEACE!!
OH! A SWORD DAGGER! I REALLY SET HIM OFF!

HEY, LOOK, WHAT'S THAT?? AFTER HIM!
OH, OH! I SHOULD HAVE CHANGED TO VIC SAGE INSIDE!

I CAN'T LOSE THEM SO THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO SHAKE THEM OFF THE QUESTION...MAKE HIM DISAPPEAR!
THEY'LL HAVE NO INTEREST IN JUST VIC SAGE!
WHA...HEY, DID YOU SEE...
YEAH...A GUY WITH NO FACE, HE WENT OUT THE WINDOW!
BOY HE MUST BE A HUMAN FLY TO TAKE THAT WAY OUT, WE'RE 20 STORIES UP!
THAT DELAY GAVE BORIS A HEAD START AND I CAN'T EVEN TAKE TIME TO CALL NORA!
WHERE'S THE PAINTING SAGE GAVE YOU? IT MUST BE DESTROYED!!
YOU WANT TO DESTROY MY PROPERTY?
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! IT WON'T LEAVE ME ALONE! IT WON'T STOP ACCUSING ME!! IT MUST BE DESTROYED! IT'S THE ONLY WAY I'LL FIND PEACE... PLEASE, WHERE IS IT?
I HAVE IT RIGHT HERE!
DESTROY IT I'LL PAY ANYTHING YOU ASK...JUST DESTROY IT NOW! PLEASE, FOR MY SAKE!
I WON'T DESTROY THIS ART TO SATISFY YOUR EMOTIONAL EXERCISES!
ALL CLEAR! COME ON OR WE'LL NEVER GET THE REST OF THE DOUGH!
I SHOULD NEVER HAVE LET YOU TALK ME INTO COMING BACK! I'M STILL SHAKING FROM THAT GUY!
OH, OH I BETTER TAKE THEM ON BEFORE THEY GET TO NORA'S ROOM AND JOIN BORIS. BORIS COULD BE TROUBLE ENOUGH BY HIMSELF!
THEY MIGHT NOT BE AFRAID OF JUST ANOTHER MAN, BUT...
6

THE QUESTION S THE LAST PERSON THEY D EXPECT OR WANT TO SEE AGAIN!
SOMEONE IS... OH, NO! PLEASE DON'T!
HEY, WHAT THE ...!
STAY BACK! HE CAME AFTER ME AGAIN...AAH!
YOU MEAN YOU WEREN'T LYING, HE DID...AAH!
THEY'RE TOO SCARED TO PUT UP A FIGHT SO HE WON'T BE GETTING UP AFTER THIS...
AND YOU'LL ALSO STAY DOWN!
I DIDN'T LOSE MUCH TIME! IT WILL BE BETTER IF BORIS FACES VICSAGE IN THE SHOWDOWN!
...AND IF HE'S DONE ANYTHING TO NORA OR THE PAINTING!
PLEASE... DON'T FORCE ME! DON'T MAKE ME DO IT! I'LL PAY YOU... BUT DESTROY IT
I M NOT A HIRED ACCOMPLICE TO ANY OR ME! ANY FORCE WILL START FROM YOU!... YOU WANT THE PAINTING DESTROYED...YOU, ALONE WILL HAVE TO DO IT... IF YOU CAN!

WELL, BORIS, IT'S UP TO YOU! YOUR TERROR BROUGHT YOU HERE...WHAT YOU CAN'T BEAR TO FACE IS WITHIN YOUR REACH TO DESTROY! WHAT STOPS YOU?...THE FIGURE ON THE CANVAS!
SHUT UP! DON'T TRY TO INTERFERE!
I'LL SHOW YOU...STOP! STOP STARING...STOP ACCUSING ME! I DIDN'T MEAN TO BETRAY YOU!
I TRIED TO BE LIKE YOU...I TRIED!
YOU EXPECT TOO MUCH OF ME...I'M ONLY HUMAN!
WHY WON'T YOU LET ME LIE TO MYSELF? WHY DO YOU KEEP MAKING ME SEE WHAT I LET MYSELF BECOME...STOP IT! I MUST DESTROY YOU...TO DESTROY THE PROOF OF WHAT I ONCE WANTED TO BE!
WHY COVER YOUR EYES NOW, BORIS? YOU BLINDED YOURSELF A LONG TIME AGO! YOU'VE BEEN GOING THROUGH LIFE REFUSING TO SEE...REFUSING TO KNOW! YOU ACT NOW PHYSICALLY AS YOU DID THEN, MENTALLY!
NOW I'LL FIND PEACE...WHAT
I'M SORRY, I'M SORRY! IT'S NOT MY FAULT!...I DIDN'T MEAN IT!...FORGIVE ME!
THIS IS WHERE THE RUCKUS IS OH! VIC SAGE! WE GOT TWO OUTS DE...I GUESS YOU CAN EXPLAIN IT ALL
THAT ROTTEN SAGE! HE'S GOING TO TELL EVERYONE ABOUT ME AND BORIS! NO MATTER WHERE I GO I'LL HAVE PEOPLE WHISPERING ABOUT ME...HATING ME
HE...HE DIDN'T EVEN MENTION EBAR?! HE'S MAKING ME SWEAT TILL THE TRIAL ...THAT DEVIL! I KNOW HIM. HE WANTS TO DISGRACE ME SO MY FATHER WILL PICK HIM INSTEAD OF ME TO TAKE OVER! I'VE GOT TO STOP HIM, SOMEHOW!
THAT'S IT, NORA. THE REST OF THE EVENING IS OURS!
THE END

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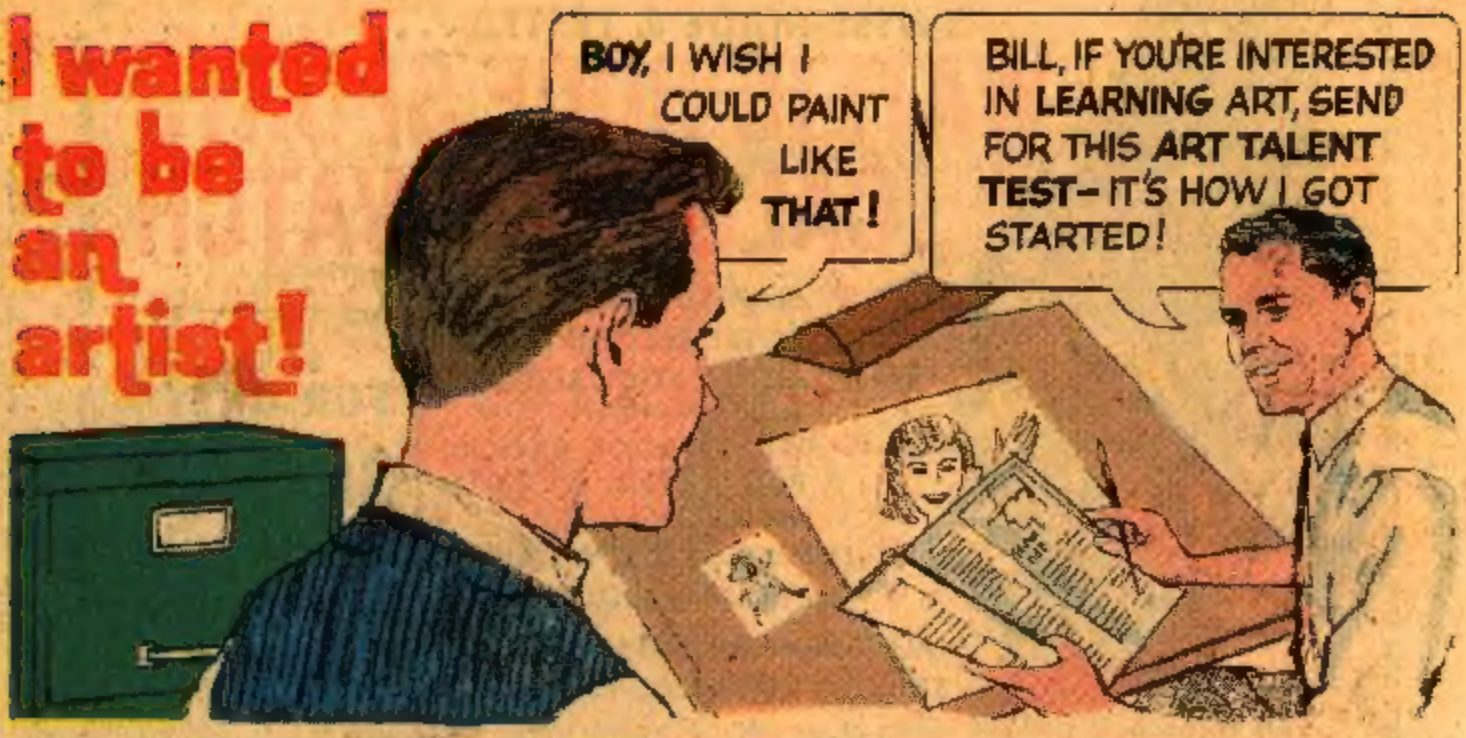
BOY, I WISH I COULD PAINT LIKE THAT!
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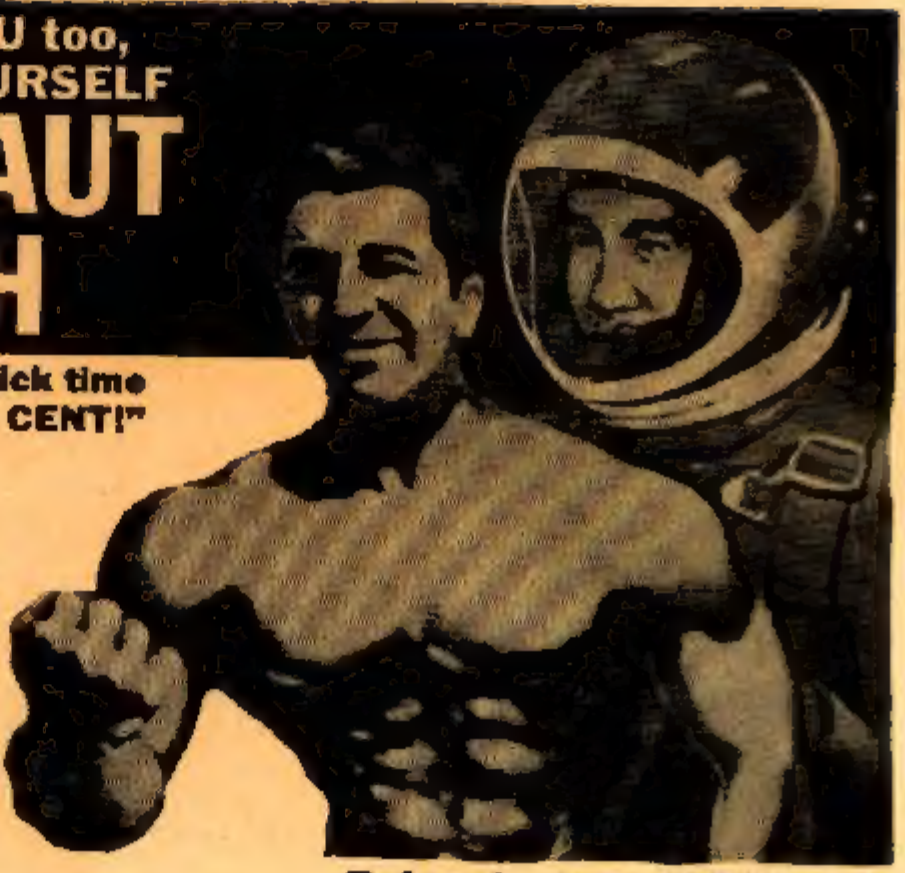
"Let me show YOU too, HOW TO MAKE YOURSELF ASTRONAUT-TOUGH



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says *Ben Rebhuhn*

whom experts called today's

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WHICH OF MY 141,000 PUPILS WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE?

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says JOHN GILL

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says Felipe Mendoza

Which of these 2 MEN is YOU?

"That 238 lb. FAT BOY was ME a few weeks ago." Look at him NOW! Gave him MIGHTY MUSCLES, added 7 inches to his CHEST, 3 inches on each arm! No! I don't care how fat and flabby you are. All I want is minutes a day in your home to make you over by the same method.

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